

Synergy Spotlight II: Funding Opportunities for SME in the bioeconomy

4 December 2025, Budapest Hungary



CEE2ACT

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The role of SMEs in the bioeconomy ToBeReal

CEE2ACT Final Event, 4th December 2025, Budapest, Hungary

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CluBE – Cluster of Bioeconomy and Western Macedonia

ToBeReal Partner



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement No 101181799.



The main goal of ToBeReal is to catalyse public, private and public-private bioeconomy projects at different stages of maturity leading to a higher number of flagship projects across Europe.

Open Report mapping future needs, barriers and enablers to enhance the competitiveness of novel bioeconomy projects

**Specialised and tailor-made services in 4 verticals (T, B, R, S, L)
30 bioeconomy projects assisted**

Countries and regions with a bioeconomy underdeveloped



Widening countries under Horizon Europe, and which demonstrated underrepresentation throughout the implementation of the BBI JU programme (2014-2019):

Bulgaria
Croatia
Cyprus
Czechia
Estonia
Greece
Hungary
Latvia
Lithuania
Malta
Poland
Portugal
Romania
Slovakia
Slovenia

Additionally, **ToBeReal** will include the EU regions (at NUTS2 level) categorized as **"less developed" or "transition"** under the cohesion policy and similarly identified as underrepresented within the CBE JU programme NUTS classification.





Our services and their values in ToBe Coins



Countries and regions with a bioeconomy underdeveloped



CEE2ACT

Services portfolio



- Basic bioeconomy techno-economic assessment
- Emerging bioeconomy technology intelligence
- Environmental Impact and sustainability assessment
- Bio-based supply chain assessment and optimisation
- European biomass feedstock analysis and forecasting



Technical



Business & Financial

- Business model & business plan creation/improvement
- Go-to-Market & exploitation strategy
- Identification of public funding opportunities and application strategy design
- Identification of private funding opportunities

- European and national bioeconomy policies and strategies
- European and national regulatory environment and planning



Regulatory & Policy



Social Innovation

- Online stakeholder mapping workshop
- Online co-creation workshop with targeted stakeholders
- Assessment of the social impact
- Brand perception and trust evaluation
- Systemic Innovation Readiness level Assessment
- Social acceptance study
- Choice experiment



Package 1 – Technical Assistance



Technical support to strengthen the feasibility and scalability of bioeconomy projects, it helps projects build a solid foundation for successful development and market deployment.



Basic bioeconomy techno-economic assessment



Emerging bioeconomy technology intelligence



Environmental impact and sustainability assessment



Bio-based supply chain assessment and optimisation



European biomass feedstock analysis and forecasting

Package 2 – Business & Financial Assistance



Shaping robust business strategies and accessing suitable funding opportunities. It enables projects to enhance their financial sustainability and strengthen their market positioning.



Business model & business plan creation/improvement



Go-to-Market & exploitation strategy



Identification of private funding opportunities



Identification of public funding opportunities and application strategy design

Package 3 – Regulatory & Policy Assistance



Navigate complex regulatory landscapes and align with relevant policy frameworks related to the bioeconomy. By anticipating regulatory challenges early, the services within this package facilitates smoother deployment of innovative technologies and enhances long-term viability.



European and national bioeconomy policies and strategies



European and national regulatory environment and planning

Package 4 – Social Innovation Assistance



Enhancing the social relevance, acceptance, and impact of bioeconomy projects. By integrating societal perspectives, the package supports the development of inclusive and socially responsive innovations.



Online stakeholder mapping workshop



Online co-creation workshop with targeted stakeholders



Assessment of the social impact



Brand perception and trust evaluation

Systemic Innovation Readiness level Assessment



Social acceptance study



Choice experiment





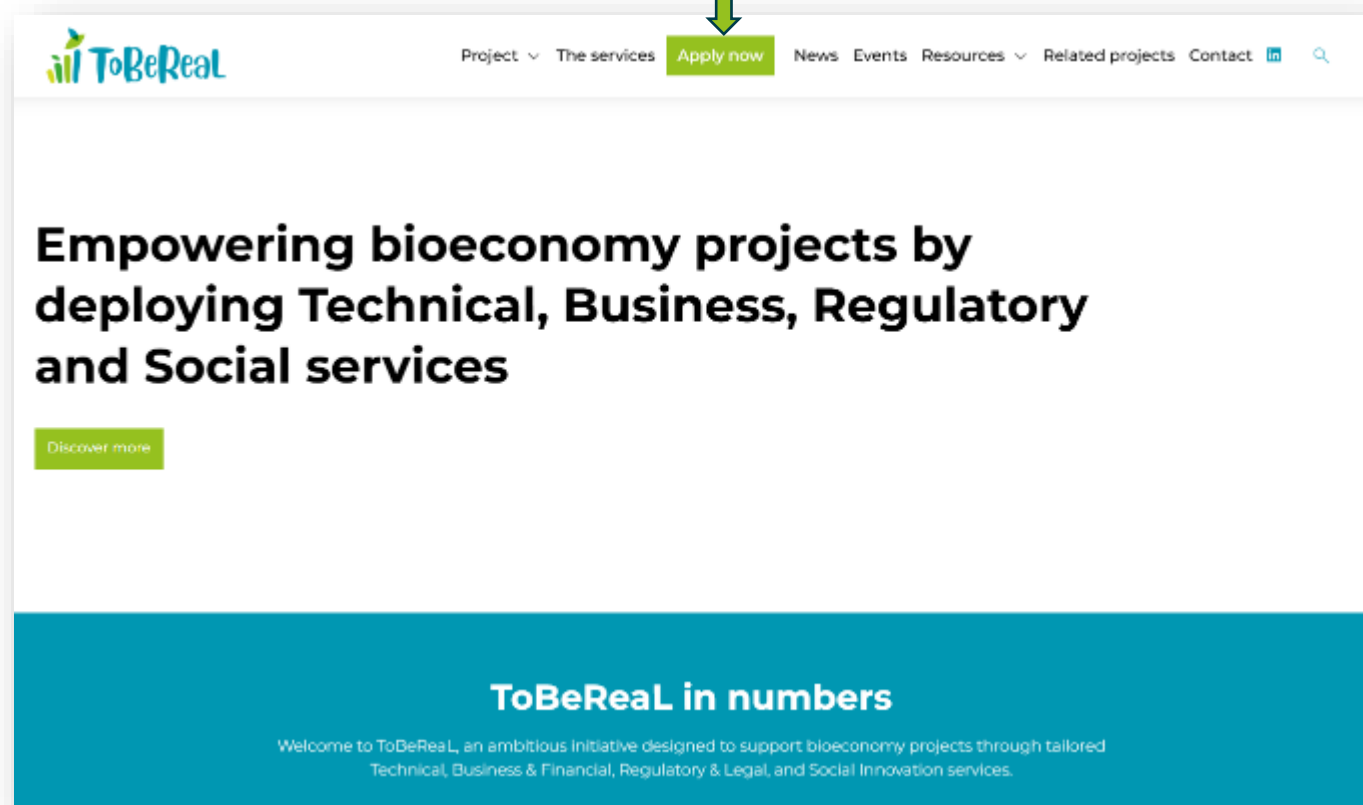
How to apply



Step-by-Step



“Apply now”



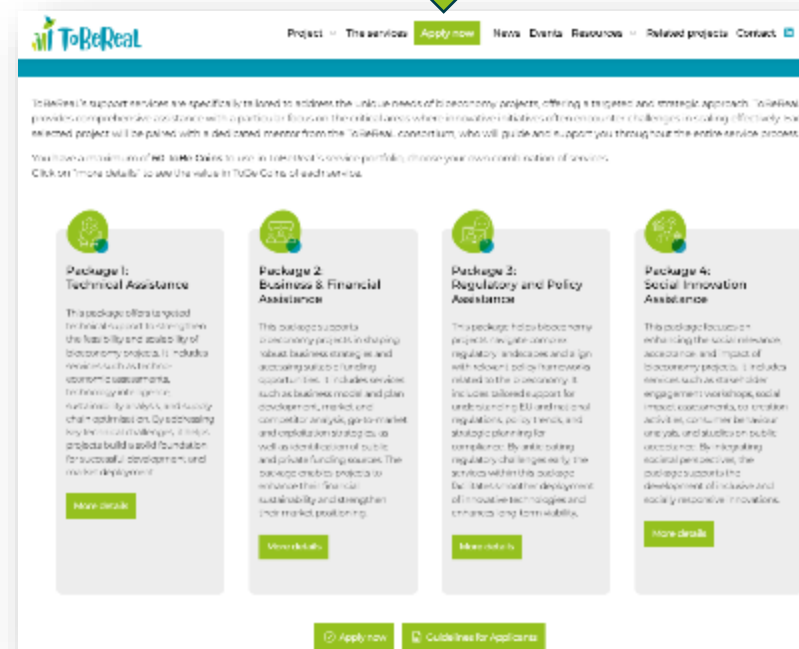
The screenshot shows the homepage of the ToBeReal website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Project, The services, Apply now, News, Events, Resources, Related projects, and Contact. A green arrow points from the "Apply now" button to a green box containing the text "Apply now". Below the navigation bar, the main heading reads "Empowering bioeconomy projects by deploying Technical, Business, Regulatory and Social services". A green button labeled "Discover more" is positioned below the heading. At the bottom of the page, a blue banner contains the text "ToBeReal in numbers" and a welcome message: "Welcome to ToBeReal, an ambitious initiative designed to support bioeconomy projects through tailored Technical, Business & Financial, Regulatory & Legal, and Social Innovation services."



Make sure that your bioeconomy project/idea complies with the definition of **“bioeconomy project”** and **“flagship project”**

Visit the portfolio of services before you apply to **chose your own combination** to satisfy the challenges your encounter to scale-up effectively

60 ToBe Coins to use!



The screenshot shows the services page of the ToBeReal website. It features four service packages, each with a green icon and a "More details" button. The packages are: Package 1: Technical Assistance, Package 2: Business & Financial Assistance, Package 3: Regulatory and Policy Assistance, and Package 4: Social Innovation Assistance. At the bottom of the page, there are two green buttons: "Apply now" and "Guidelines for Applicants".

Application package



Project ▾ The services **Apply now** News Events Resources ▾ Related projects Contact

Questionnaire

This is a 5-step form designed to guide you through a quick and simple process.
Please note that your progress **cannot be saved between steps**, so make sure to complete all sections in one go.

Word document of the questionnaire and the Readiness Level Forms to facilitate the off-line preparation.

Let's get started!



CONTACT DETAILS

Project Name *

Acronym *

Is the project:

☐ Private ☐ Public ☐ Public-Private

CONTACT PERSON

First and Last name *

Job title or role in the project

Email *

Phone Number

COORDINATION ENTITY

Coordination entity name *



ToBeReal Guidelines for applications

[Download here](#)



Initial Questionnaire ([Online Submission](#)).

A Word document, is also available to facilitate off-line preparation.

[Download here](#)



Readiness Level Forms ([Online Submission](#)).

A word document, is also available to facilitate off-line preparation

[Download here](#)



Evaluation criteria and scoring system

[Discover more information](#)

Still have doubts → email us to infor@tobereal.eu



EVALUATION CRITERIA AND SCORING SYSTEM



Likelihood-based Scoring System



ToBeReal will follow the concept “**Scaling Readiness**” to assess the readiness and **likelihood of the bioeconomy project’s innovations to achieve scaling objectives to become flagships** based on the information provide in the application forms across the 4 Readiness Levels: TRL, BRL, RRL and SRL

- ▶ **Low Likelihood: 1 point:** The *bioeconomy project* has low likelihood to become flagship project within the timeframe of 5 years.
- ▶ **Medium Likelihood: 2 points:** The *bioeconomy project* has medium likelihood to become flagship project within the timeframe of 5 years.
- ▶ **High Likelihood: 3 points:** The *bioeconomy project* has high likelihood to become flagship project within the timeframe of 5 years.

Minimum 4 points

Maximum 12 points

Threshold: 9 points

+ 1 additional point to underdeveloped bioeconomies

Evaluation Criteria in each Readiness Level (RL)



SCORING TRL

- *Innovation Potential*
- *Technical Feasibility*
- *Scalability and Replicability potential*
- *Sustainability of the feedstock*

SCORING BRL

- *Economic Viability*
- *Value proposition and Business Model*
- *Requested investment/public funding*
- *Composition of project's consortium & roles*

SCORING RRL

- *In scope for appropriate regulations and with potential to progress to regulatory approval.*
- *Feedstock's fulfilment with regulation imposing sustainability criteria and GHG emissions.*

SCORING SRL

- *Potential to engage with the right stakeholders*
- *Fairness of the value chain*
- *Potential to communicate the benefits of the innovation*
- *Social impact of the developed solution*
- *Inclusivity*



Long-term assistance to bioeconomy projects



Long-term assistance



3 BioPitch Forum

- The first BioPitch Forum is going to happen on 2026, in **Spain** (city to be defined).
- **Open to public.**
- **Date to be defined.**



- BioPitch Forum will help to **ensure the progression of selected projects** towards becoming flagship projects.



- For that purpose, the BioPitch Forum **will feature interactive sessions and networking opportunities** to accommodate diverse learning preference.



- The events will foster matchmaking and collaboration, idea generation and engagement with potential feedstock providers, technology providers and investors.



- Feedback will be gathered from the participants of all events to identify areas of improvement for future engagement activities.

10 bioeconomy webinars

Please scan the QR code with your camera to check the previous webinars.
Available to general public.



**10 assisted projects of each round
are invited to the BioPitchForum
Event**

Access to the Community Platform

**Virtual Progress meeting (1h) with
the mentor**

**One-to-one mentoring session (30
min) with the experts**

**Roadmap for guiding projects
towards flagship status**

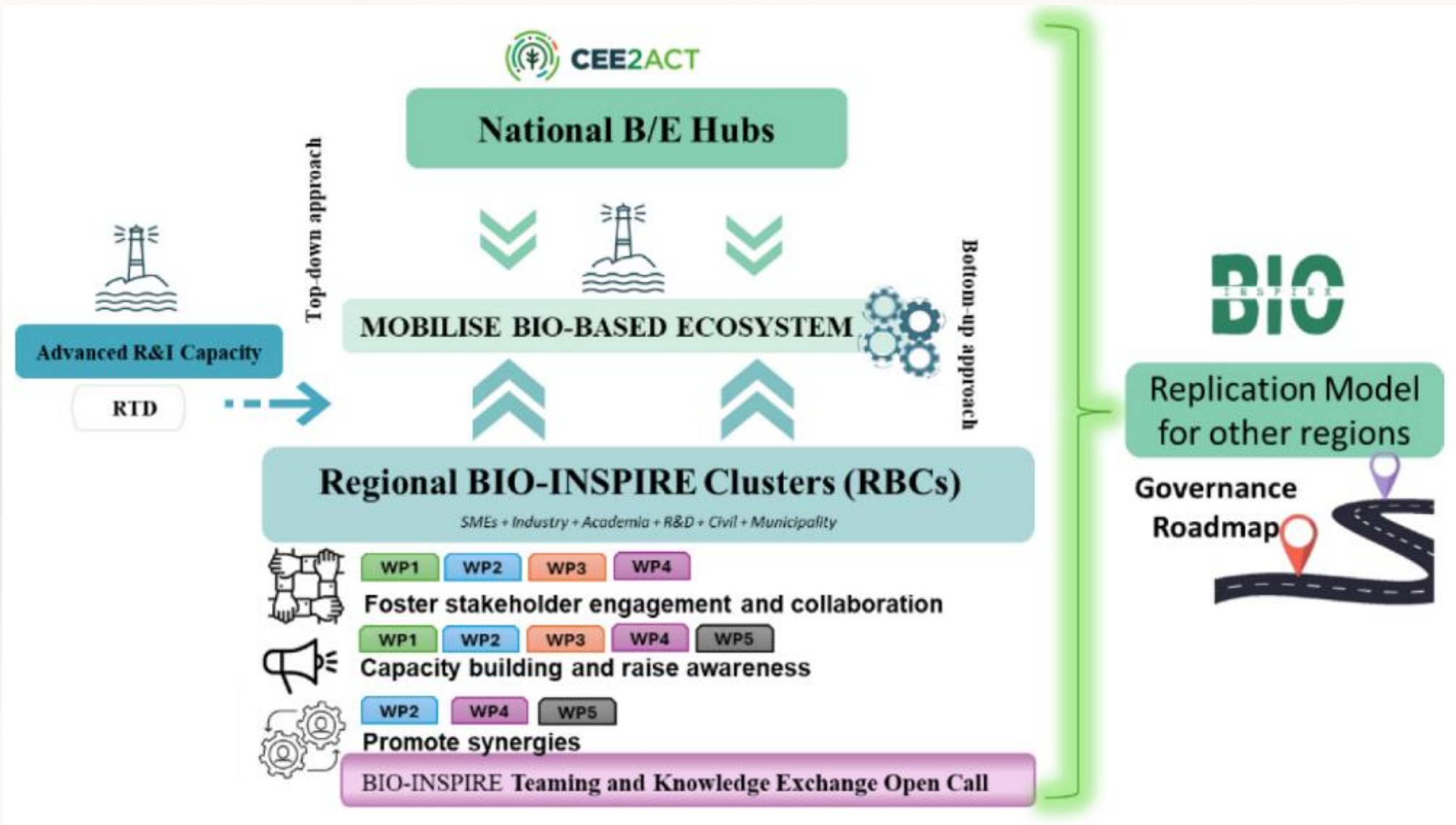


The role of Clusters to support SMEs in the field of bioeconomy in Widening countries



Call Identifier	HORIZON-JU-CBE-2024-CSA-02 - Mobilize inclusive participation in bio-based systems and supporting the CBE JU widening strategy and its action plan
Type of Action	HORIZON JU Coordination and Support Actions
Cordis Link	<u>ENHANCING BIO-BASED INNOVATION AND PARTICIPATION IN UNDER-REPRESENTED REGIONS THROUGH CLUSTER MOBILIZATION AND COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE</u>
EU contribution	€ 2 999 180,00
Start Date // End Date	1 May 2025 // 30 April 2028 (3 years)
N° Partners	14 Beneficiaries
N° Countries	12 European Countries
Coordinator	Cluster of Bioeconomy & Environment of Western Macedonia (CluBE), Greece – Ioannis Fallas
Website	https://www.bio-inspire.eu/
LinkedIn	https://www.linkedin.com/company/bio-inspire-project/

Connection between CEE2ACT & BIO-INSPIRE



Overview BIO-INSPIRE



Composed of 7 Regional BIO-INSPIRE Cluster (RBCs), across:



- Lithuania (Sostines),
- Poland (West Pomeranian),
- Slovakia (Nitra Region),
- Hungary (Central Region),
- Romania (North-West Region),
- Bulgaria (South/Central Region),
- Greece (Western Macedonia).

Selected **Clusters** to address the **significant unexploited potential** in Europe's less developed and transition areas



Active engagement with the stakeholders of the **entire value chain** of each region to **foster synergies and enhance innovation capacity**

Study-visits (1 with forest bioeconomy focuses and 1 with agricultural and food systems) to exchange best practices, strengthen the clusters and mobilise interregional cluster networks

Establishment of **Cooperation and Clustering Network (CCN)** that will include representatives and coordinators of relevant EU projects for i) Plan Shared Actions; ii) Identify common goals; iii) Setting up a LinkedIn group to host the members of the network and iv) explore opportunities for cooperation with WP4 open call winners.

Undestanting the local bioeconomy context

Support the Regional Bioeconomy Clusters in order to :

- develop a comprehensive **Governance Model Road-Map** for suitable and replicable collaboration, and to provide concrete and actionable policy briefs at the local and EU level.
- foster **stakeholder engagement and co-creation** and promote the adoption of bio-based solutions.
- design **Communities of Practices** that foster effective cross-border and thematic engagement on shared R&I opportunities and challenges.
- empower **Bio-Based Regions**: Knowledge Transfer and Capacity Building for Sustainable Growth.
- launch a Cross-Border Teaming & Knowledge Exchange **Open Call**.
- create **Bio-Based Collaboration and Synergies** across Bio-based value chains.

BIO-INSPIRE Knowledge Exchange Platform to support RB Clusters and their bio-based ecosystems

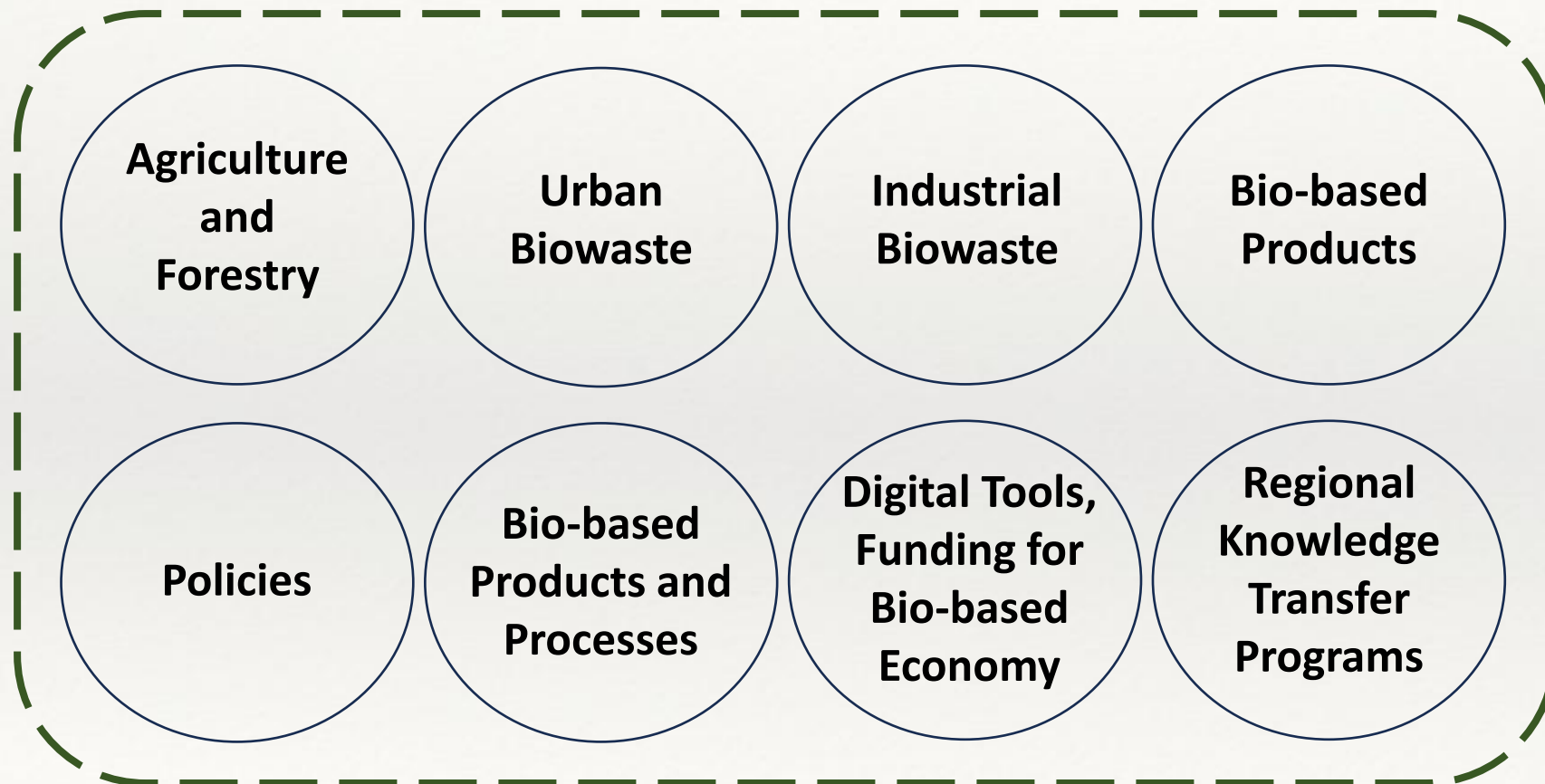
- Newcomers of the sector: training materials.
- BIO-INSPIRE: training resources, online training sessions and webinars.
- Open access resource with open-access data
- Users also can upload and share research findings, publications, datasets, case studies, webinars, training materials, main results of the projects within a following template.

Knowledge transfer for all bio-based stakeholders and attracting the newcomers of bioeconomy sectors

BIO-INSPIRE Digital Tools:

Knowledge exchange platform:

- will feature structured educational and training activities in the bioeconomy sector, complementing the more flexible format of the CoP;
- will additionally launch BIO-INSPIRE 4 training and education modules following the 8 themes of the CoPs, tailored to the needs of the RBC;
- Developed by all partners and managed by GEONARDO.



- 10 strategically planned meetings.

Goal

Collaborative problem-solving
Planning joint initiatives
Networking breaks

Cascade Funding for Teaming in Bioeconomy



Current stage: December 2025 – M8

Call Design and publication (M11-M15)

Rules definition, publication, coordination based on the rules defined in the Annex for FSTP.

March-July 2026



Call evaluation and selection of projects (M14-M17)

Each proposal will be evaluated by 2 experts (1 from the consortium and 1 external);

The evaluators recruitment process will start on M14;

Call evaluation process (M16-M17);

Informing of the results.

June – September 2026



Call Finance, Legal and Monitoring (M18-M25)

Legal aspects of the sub-grantee agreements to assure that Horizon Europe principles are respected

Preparation of all the clauses based on HE in FSTP granting.

Payment for the calls: 3 installments (30% after initial KoM with the TP, 20% after M3 assessment and 50% on the completion and final assessment).

October 2026 to May 2027

December 2026 to May 2027

Support

- Administrative
- Technical
- General issues

Training

- Material
- Tools created in 'Train the trainer' modules and 'Training and education modules'.

Assessment

- The evaluation will be done by:
- The 1st evaluation is based on the attendance of a mandatory KoM and agreement of the KPIs.
- The 2nd and the final one, based on bio-based innovation planned activities and budget

Capacity Building & Support

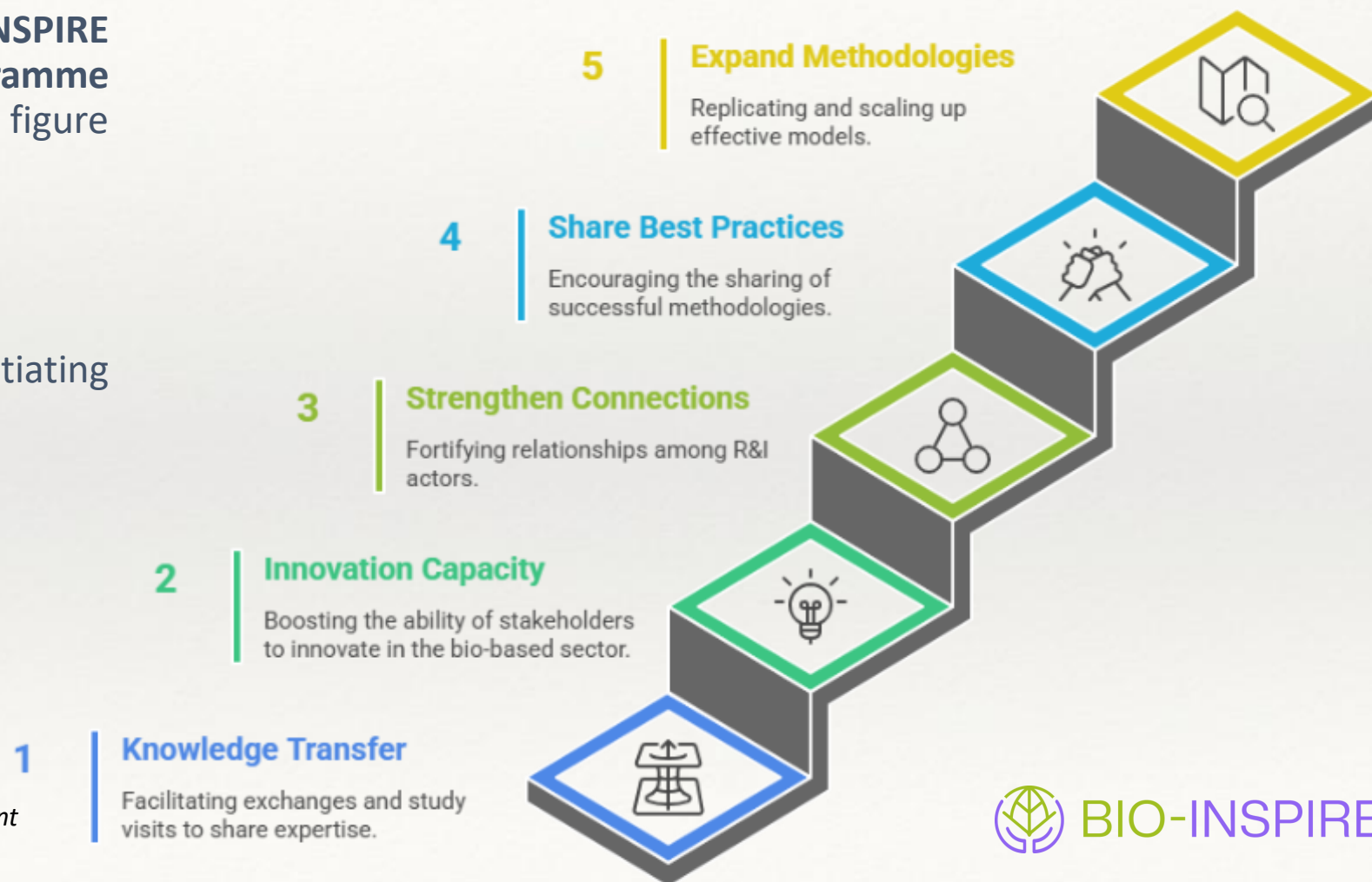
Financial Support to Third Parties



The primary objective of **BIO-INSPIRE Teaming & Knowledge Exchange Programme Open Call (OC)** is described on the figure aside.

- To be launched on M14 (June 2026).
- It will have 6 months duration, initiating on M20 (December 2026).
- Third parties (TP) selected: 30*
- Grant/TP: ≈10,000 euros*
- Total Budget: 300,000 euros*.

**Information based on Tentative Grant allocation from the Financial Support to Third Parties, described on Grant Agreement*



Thank you! Questions?

Yannis Fallas – Director

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