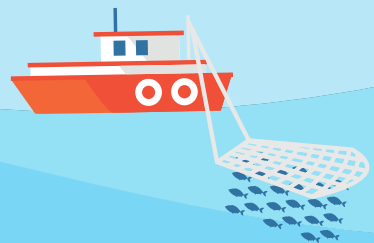
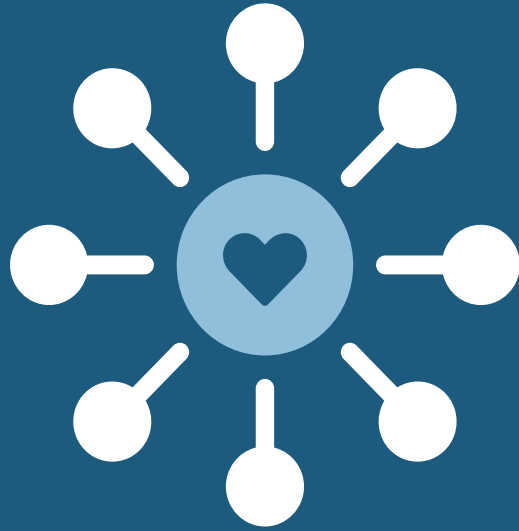


# A GUIDE TO COMMERCIALISATION SUPPORT OF R&I PROJECTS





## Knowledge to Commerce: Unlocking Impact

Impact is a critical element in R&I projects, encompassing scientific advancements, societal effects and commercial viability.

To challenge the “valley of death” and ensure research uptake from R&I projects, the Blue Bioeconomy ERA-Net Cofund has developed a number of support initiatives.

## Scaling the Blue Bioeconomy: From research to commercial success

To promote the blue bioeconomy, we must bridge the gap between research and the market for innovative outputs.

Transitioning from research to commercial scale is challenging, and research is often lost after funding ends.

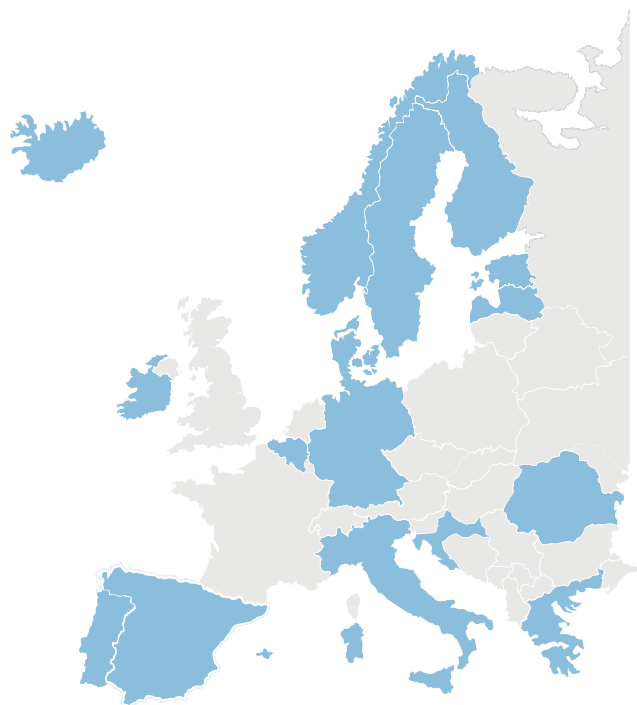
Facilitating R&I project commercialisation is vital to maximise impact and ensure uptake in society and business.



## The Blue Bioeconomy ERA-Net Cofund

A collaboration between 30 funding agencies and ministry representatives from 17 countries

BlueBio is a coordinated funding scheme to boost Europe's blue bioeconomy, by identifying new and improving existing ways of bringing bio-based products and services to the market, and finding new ways of creating value from the blue bioeconomy.



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement 817992.



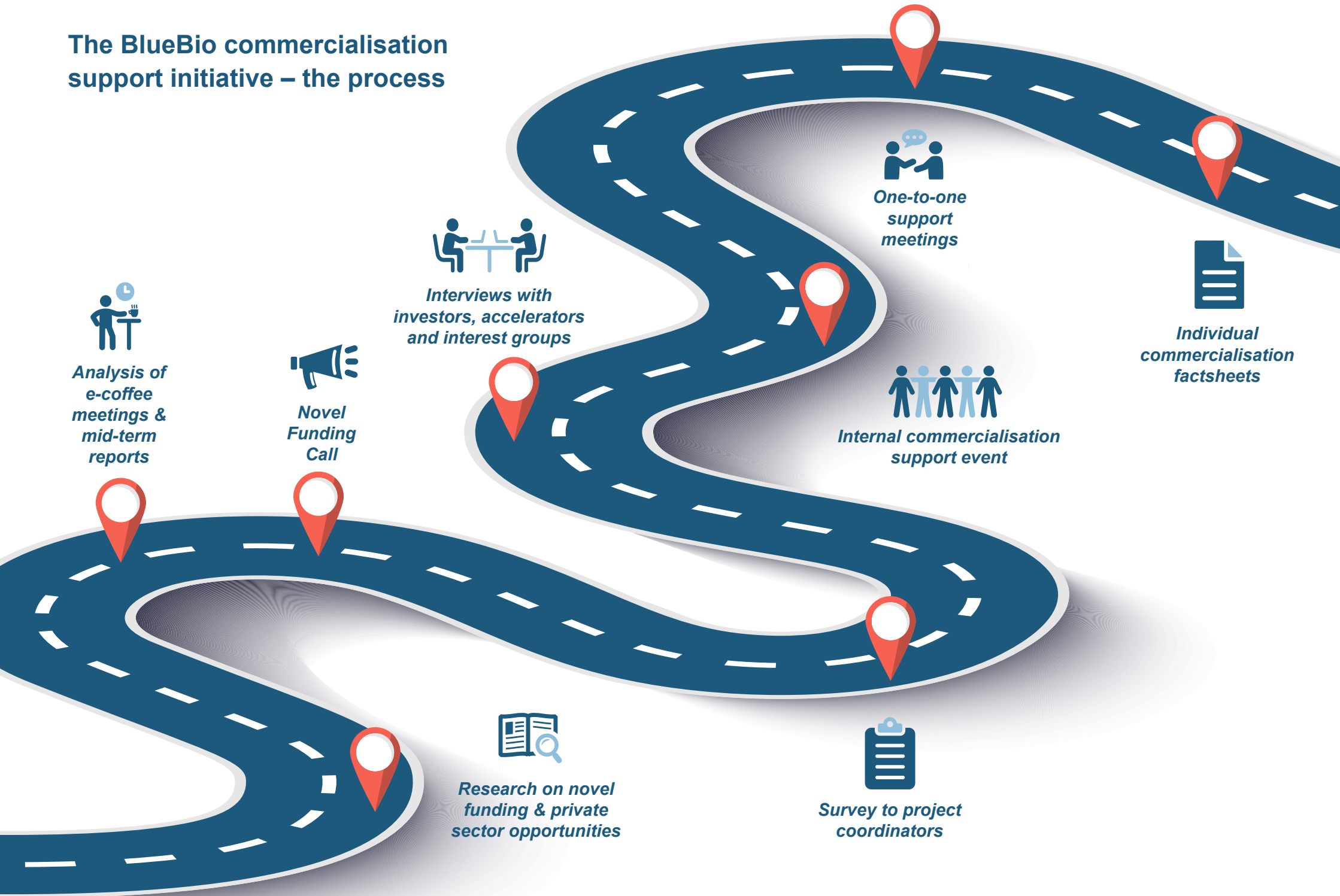
### The BlueBio commercialisation support initiative

One of BlueBio Cofund's objectives was to create research and innovation calls that boost Europe's bioeconomy.

Impact is a critical element in R&I projects, encompassing scientific advancements, societal effects and commercial viability. In BlueBio, novelty and value creation was ensured in the R&I projects as Technology Readiness Level advanced over the project duration.

Involving industry partners in the R&I projects promoted industry-oriented co-creation, ensuring project outputs with commercial applications and academia-industry interactions.

# The BlueBio commercialisation support initiative – the process



## Research on novel funding & private sector opportunities

To advance the European bioeconomy, proactive stakeholder engagement plays a pivotal role in discovering innovative ideas. In this context, two key BlueBio milestones were achieved.

The first involved exploring novel funding opportunities, both within the Cofund, including the 3rd additional call, and outside of it, encompassing programs like EIT FOOD, CBE JU, Horizon Europe and EMFAF\*.

The second milestone centered on engaging with the private sector, such as CBE JU (a public-private partnership for funding) and BlueInvest.

\*CBE JU (Circular Bio-based Europe Joint Undertaking),  
EMFAF (European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund).



## Analysis of e-coffee meetings & mid-term reports

The Cofund organised e-coffees for funded projects, fostering discussions, networking, and collaboration.

This virtual platform allowed projects to address topics like commercialisation and capacity building, offering insight into their needs.

Feedback and mid-term reports from these meetings informed our future steps, especially regarding commercialisation support and funding.

## Novel Funding Call

A short-term, small scale funding call enabled BlueBio projects to amplify their project impact, emphasizing dissemination, business commercialisation, capacity building, policy mapping.



## Interviews with investors, accelerators & interest groups

We interacted with investors, accelerators, and interest groups in the European blue bioeconomy realm.

This involved informative sessions to comprehend investor perspectives on applied research's path to market, the information they require for financing decisions, and how projects align with investor interests in thematic areas.

## Survey to project coordinators

After engaging with the investment and innovation community, we conducted a survey to map our project's commercialisation needs and status.

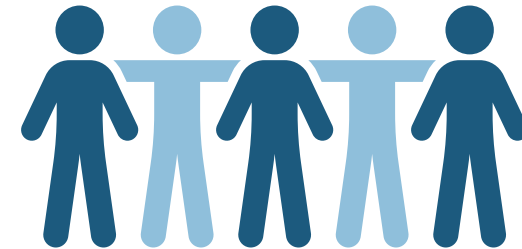
The survey sought information on Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), Project outputs and their Technology Readiness Levels, industry partner size (SME, Large Enterprise etc), commercialisation needs, and interest in developing spin-out companies.



## Internal commercialisation support event

An online event gathered project coordinators and industry partners to:

- Share funding and support opportunities.
- Gather support needs from projects.
- Hear pitches from 5 projects about advancing to the next level.
- Discuss next steps, BlueBio's support, and enhancing market readiness.
- Projects with higher TRL outputs had one-to-one meetings for tailored support.





## One-to-one support meetings

After the online event, the more commercialisation ready projects were offered one-to-one support meetings. Understanding more of the commercialisation support needs of the projects from the survey and the support event, it was possible to connect the projects with funding opportunities and other interest groups who could support the next step in their journey.

## Individual commercialisation factsheets

- Based on insights from engaging with the private sector and investor discussions, a proposal emerged to create concise one-page project factsheets.
- These factsheets include details such as industry partner location, project outputs, TRL, description, IPR status (if applicable), and commercialisation needs.
- Such factsheets were seen as a valuable tool for projects seeking additional investment beyond conventional funding avenues.





## Learnings from e-coffee meetings with the projects

The e-coffee meetings aimed to foster synergies among funded projects in the Cofund, facilitating collaboration while projects were ongoing.

Peer-to-peer conversations revealed connections between Work Packages, method comparisons, inter-project input-output relationships, and shared interests leading to topical meetings.

These sessions sparked new collaborations and applications. They addressed common challenges, such as Human Capacity Building (HCB) and Commercialisation Support.

- With minimal organisation, spaces for productive sharing and synergies can be created.
- Projects exchanged outputs as inputs, and comparative papers emerged.
- Collaborative project applications and HCB improvement resulted from feedback and e-coffee discussions.

## Create space to learn from mid-term evaluations

The mid-term evaluation, conducted online due to COVID travel restrictions, allowed broader participation from projects, coordinators, Work Package leaders and other participants. Feedback from projects highlighted several key points:

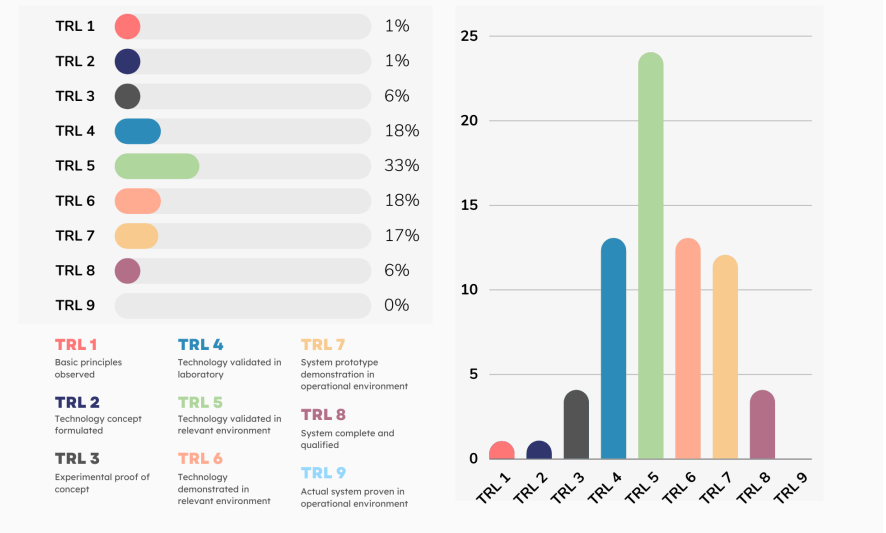
- The mandatory inclusion of industry partners significantly influenced project development, shaping questions, methods, outputs, and alignment with society and the market.
- Many projects struggled to extend HCB beyond students, leading to its inclusion as a topic in the 3rd Additional Call.
- Projects often under-allocated funds or had ambitious communication plans that could not be realised, necessitating flexible funding for communication efforts, which led to the inclusion of communication and dissemination as topics in the 3rd Additional Call.

## Know your projects – survey them

The BlueBio projects were surveyed to better understand their commercialisation needs and maturity.

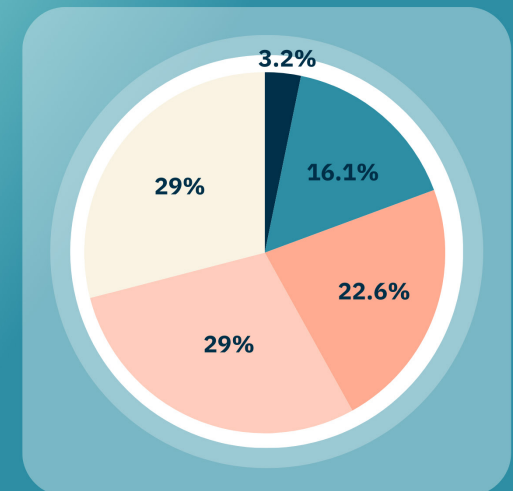
- TRL between 1 and 8 were identified by coordinators at conclusion of projects – the majority were TRL 4-7
- Nearly 50% indicated the potential for spin-out company to develop, with three projects indicating a firm yes to spin-out company
- Nearly 40% of projects were at pilot scale or ready to move to commercial scale

## TRL OF PROJECT OUTCOMES



## Upscaling Journey

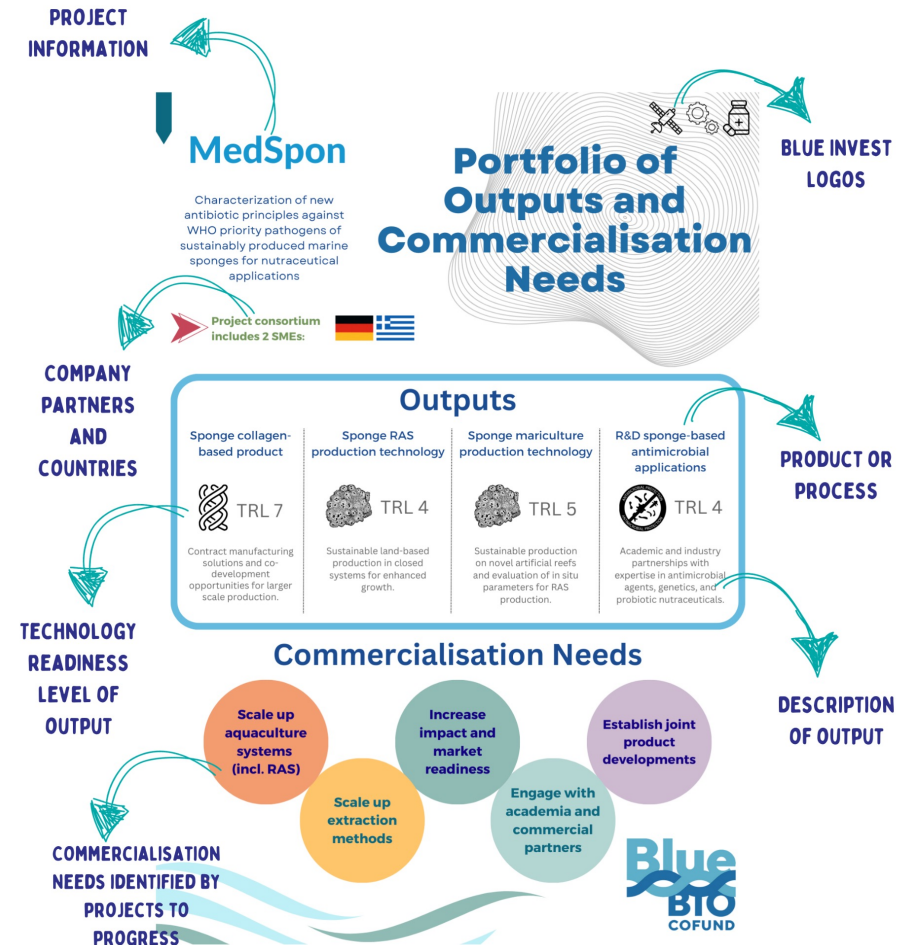
- Starting or at commercial scale
- Pilot scale ready to move to commercial scale
- Starting or at pilot scale
- Laboratory scale ready to move to pilot scale
- Starting or at laboratory scale



## Concrete output: project factsheets

Factsheets were made to quickly present the investment needs and commercialisation potential of each project. The factsheets are shared with relevant stakeholders and investors.

- Coordinators actively participated once they grasped the concept.
- Some coordinators faced challenges in being concise when describing project outputs.
- Using a draft factsheet, populated with survey and online research data, proved beneficial, saving project consortia from starting from scratch.
- The use of BlueInvest icons for sectoral opportunities was seen as valuable for exploring further investment.



## Recommendations

- For optimal R&I project impact, especially those led by research institutions, crucial support includes disseminating funding information to advance innovation to higher TRLs.
- Foster collaboration among ongoing projects in a shared space to create synergies and opportunities to adjust support from funders.
- Leverage project feedback to generate additional funding opportunities tailored to specific needs.
- Research funders should familiarise themselves with commercialisation opportunities and facilitate knowledge exchange through concise overviews of project outputs and needs.
- Involve industry partners from project inception to shape design and drive market uptake.

## HOW TO SUPPORT RDI PROJECTS IN THEIR COMMERCIALISATION JOURNEY

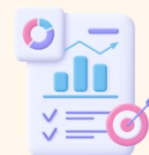


### CONDUCT THOROUGH RESEARCH

Undertake research on innovative funding and private sector prospects. Initiate conversations with investors, accelerators, and other relevant interest groups to gain insights into their requirements.

### ENGAGE WITH PROJECTS

Conduct surveys, events, and one-to-one meetings to map the projects requirements.



### PROJECT PORTFOLIO

Develop a comprehensive portfolio of outputs and commercialization requirements for each project.

### FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

To amplify the impact of projects, explore the possibility of introducing short-term, small-scale funding opportunities.





[www.bluebioeconomy.eu](http://www.bluebioeconomy.eu)

Blue Bioeconomy ERA-NET Cofund

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**Authors:**

Ingeborg Korme, The Research Council of Norway  
Majbritt Bolton-Warberg, Marine Institute  
Sigurður Björnsson, Rannís



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