

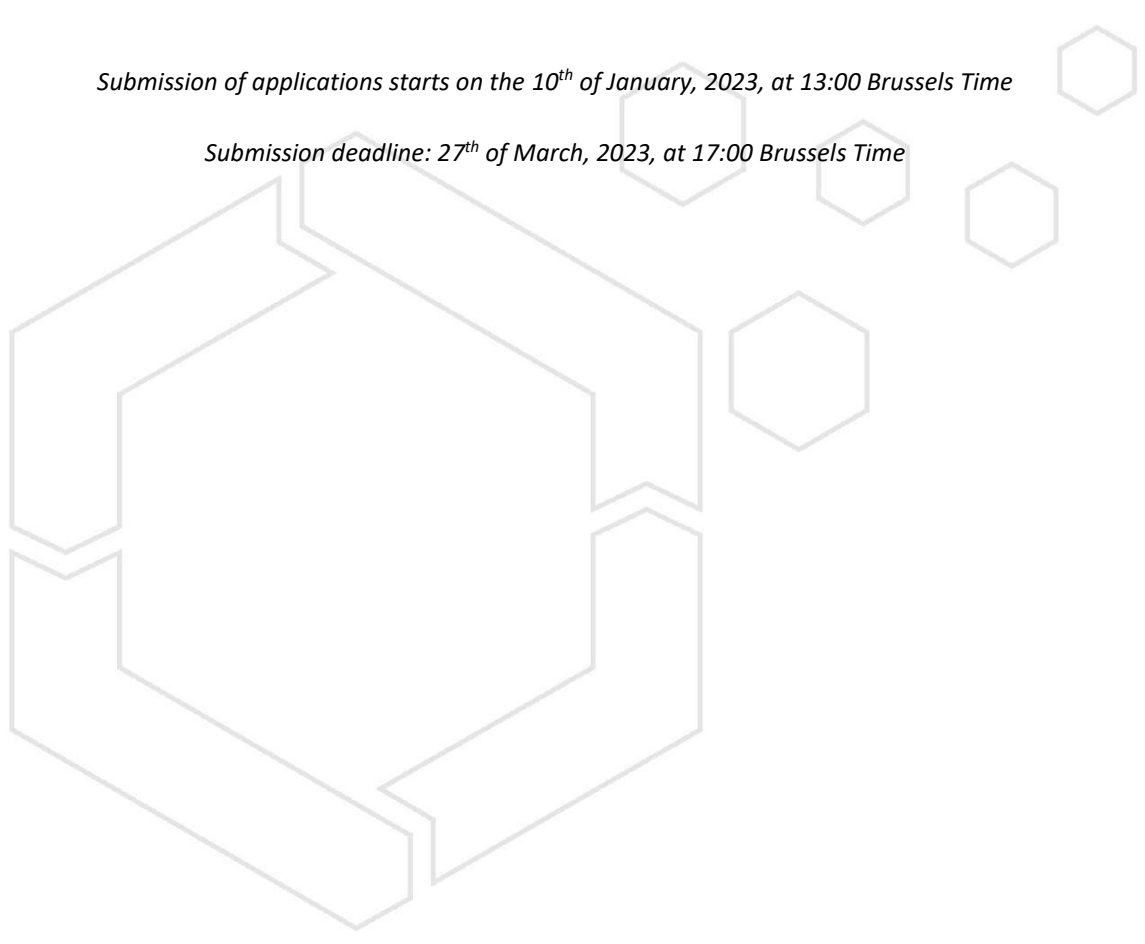


# GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS

AMULET 2<sup>nd</sup> Open Call

*Submission of applications starts on the 10<sup>th</sup> of January, 2023, at 13:00 Brussels Time*

*Submission deadline: 27<sup>th</sup> of March, 2023, at 17:00 Brussels Time*



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## History of changes

03.02.2023	Technical partners were added as participants with voting rights on the Jury Day and the Final Decision Meeting.	Pages: 12, 13
06.02.2023	Information about the eligible costs was changed.	Page: 16
22.03.2023	Change of deadline: 22.03.2023 – 27.03.2023	Page: 1, 9, 10



## 1. Basic information about AMULET

The Advanced Materials & Manufacturing United for LightWEight (AMULET) project is a HORIZON 2020 project that aims to exploit the innovation potential of small and medium-sized enterprises through a cross-sectoral and funded knowledge exchange. The goal of AMULET is to create new value chains by fostering the penetration of the three types of advanced lightweight materials in four sectors: automotive, aerospace and aeronautics, energy, and building. AMULET aims to do that through a cross-regional and cross-sectoral knowledge exchange approach.

### Considered topics

#### 4 Sectors



**BUILDING**



**AEROSPACE & AERONAUTICS**



**ENERGY**



**AUTOMOTIVE**

#### 3 Advanced materials



**POLYMER-BASED COMPOSITES**



**CERAMIC MATRIX COMPOSITES**



**LIGHT METAL ALLOYS**

Figure 1 Sectors and materials addressed in AMULET

Three types of activities will be implemented to foster innovation in SMEs (Small and Medium-sized Enterprises), as summarised in Figure 2.

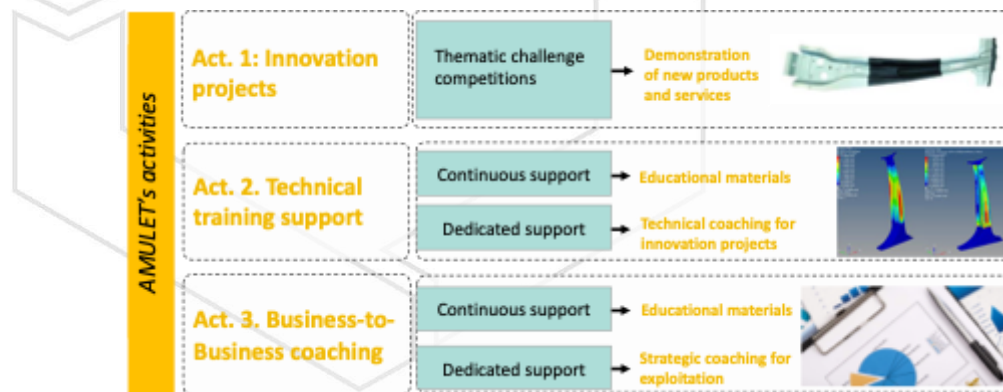


Figure 2 The three types of activities in AMULET

Firstly, innovation projects targeting current sectoral challenges will be developed to reach TRL7, following a competitive-based approach. Secondly, SMEs participating in the thematic challenge competitions will receive dedicated technical training support to develop their innovative projects. Thirdly, dedicated business-to-business coaching for accelerating the commercialization of their innovative solutions will be given to SMEs too. Besides supporting SMEs from the thematic challenge competitions, AMULET will also provide continuous support in technical and business topics through educational materials to SMEs interested in lightweight. These activities will create a unique self-sustainable business framework in which end-users and SMEs from established and new industrial supply chains will explore innovative lightweight-driven market opportunities.

The ultimate goal of AMULET is to significantly contribute to the reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and improve resource efficiency in the EU by boosting the role of SMEs, in which their innovations are expected to be facilitated & supported by clusters.

The AMULET project has 13 partners and is coordinated by 'POLYMERIS' (FR) <https://amulet-h2020.eu/partners/>.

All partners in the AMULET Consortium comprise a joint network of 1717 SMEs, 341 large companies and 93 universities, research and innovation institutes which are going to be informed about the possibilities of taking advantage of AMULET during the duration of the project.

The total AMULET budget is **€4,952,732** out of which **€3,724,849** will be distributed to SMEs as financial and non-financial support and related supporting activities. The direct financial support to SMEs under two Open Calls has a budget of **€2,424,000**.

The total budget of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Open Call as a direct support to SMEs is up to **€1,193,000**.

## 2. AMULET – background and ambition

### BACKGROUND

The relevance of lightweight materials and technologies in decarbonisation & resource efficiency for circular economy cuts across different industries, having the most important impacts on the automotive, aerospace & aeronautics, energy, and building sectors. There are three main lightweight materials used in industry: polymer-based composites, light metal alloys, and ceramic matrix composites. However, their degree of penetration in these strategic sectors has been distributed unevenly.

For example, polymer-based composites have been used in aerospace & aeronautics for more than 30 years while in automotive their high costs have hindered a wider application. Their use in energy or building sectors has been limited, resulting in niche markets with few players, in which their potential is not fully exploited. The same can be said for light metal alloys and ceramic matrix composites. The former finds wide use as structural components in aircrafts (e.g. Al and Mg alloys) while the latter has been used in high temperature applications, e.g. aerospace.

AMULET will encourage the development of solutions to challenges that are currently blocking the penetration and market uptake of these three main advanced materials for lightweighting in the four strategic sectors mentioned above. Linking innovations from one sector into another value chain can effectively result in new solutions and opportunities, thereby building new industrial value chains.

In the case of **automotive**, new value chains might result from an increasing penetration rate of lightweight materials in varied auto applications by achieving important breakthroughs on processing technologies and recycling aspects. To develop a competitive edge in the automotive market, the industry needs to focus on the current challenges towards optimising lightweight performance. This includes: cost reduction from various ways e.g. raw material cost, labour cost, energy cost; increase productivity by developing manufacturing technologies with reduced cycle time for complex parts and mass customisation; improve robustness in supply chains for raw materials, design, tooling and manufacturing for composites; enhance simulation and prediction techniques with better software for manufacturing composite parts; improve repair and recycling technologies.

**Aerospace & aeronautics** have been at the front of lightweight innovation for decades. Introducing new advances in both industries will influence their entire supply chains, including manufacturers of aero components which would lead to a better productivity. Aerospace & aeronautics could benefit as well from advances in automotive on mass manufacturing or eco-design principles in energy to ensure recyclability.

Lightweighting in the **energy** sector has been mainly driven by polymer-based composites for wind turbines. However, a variety of raw material products can meet a varied range of energy applications. AMULET aims to

identify and prioritize big-volume applications based on synergy, capability, innovation potential, opportunity size, competitive intensity, profit potential, sustainability, and other factors to drive growth. Lightweight cuts across multiple applications to reduce costs and improve competitiveness along different value chains in the renewable energy sector.

In **building**, lightweighting offers advantages in terms of cost, time and energy intensity. The use of lightweight materials in the building sector can potentially reduce the cost of load-bearing structures, as well as those of energy and installation. However, the absence of cost-effective solutions is blocking their widespread use. Other areas of application that could benefit from lightweighting include roofing, building interior and exterior elements, facades, bridges and offshore structures.

### AMBITION

AMULET aims to consolidate **novel value chains for multi-sectoral industrial applications** enabled by advanced materials and their related manufacturing technologies as Key Enabling Technologies (KETs), **ultimately contributing to decarbonisation, resource-efficiency through lightweighting** and cost reduction.

In order to consolidate new lightweight industrial value chains in the automotive, aerospace & aeronautics, energy and building sectors, AMULET identifies current sectoral challenges per type of advanced material that are related to, e.g., decarbonisation, circularity, automatisisation, cost-effectiveness (following RIS3 - Research & Innovation Smart Specialisation Strategy).

The thematic challenge-based competitions of AMULET will be organized through two Open Calls (the 1<sup>st</sup> Open Call has already been closed) under a funnel approach (described in this GfA in sections 7.1 and 7.3), where SME consortia (consisting of 2 to 3 SMEs) will develop solutions to the industrial challenges coming from industrial end-users and suppliers.

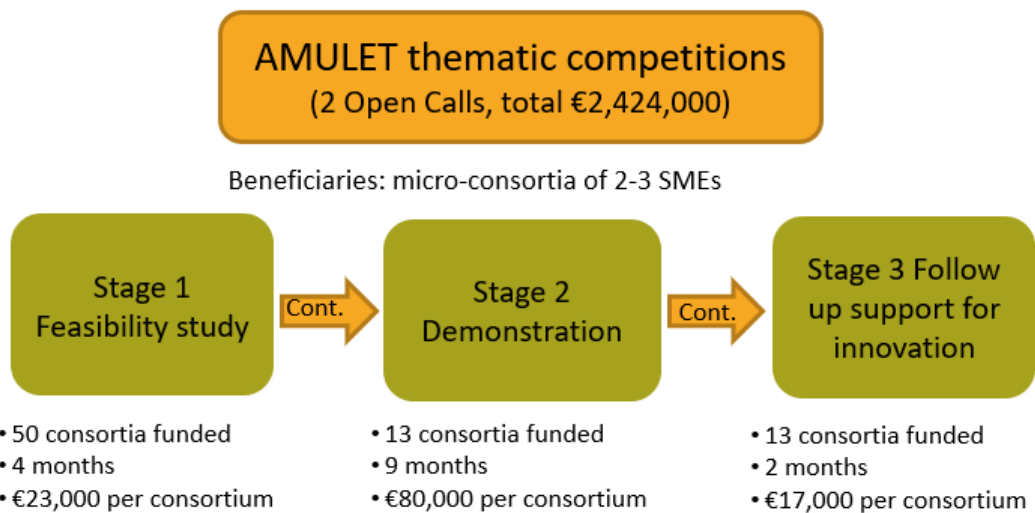


Figure 3 Overview of AMULET support actions for SMEs

### 3. 2<sup>nd</sup> Open Call - what do we offer?

The funding instrument will include a lump-sum grant of up to €120,000 per project whereas SMEs individually may not receive more than €60,000. The total duration of support provided will not exceed 15 months per project. Following a funnel system (from Stage 1 to Stage 2 of the Programme) up to **7 SME** consortia will have a chance to complete the full programme.



<b><i>AMULET thematic competitions – 2<sup>nd</sup> Open Call</i></b>	
<b>Application stage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ SME consortia (2 to 3 SMEs)</li> <li>✓ online matchmaking events</li> <li>✓ up to 36 SME consortia invited to the online Jury Day to pitch their solutions</li> </ul>
<b>Stage 1 - Feasibility study</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ up to 26 SME consortia funded</li> <li>✓ Duration: 4 months</li> <li>✓ up to €23,000 lump sum (per micro-consortium)</li> </ul>
<b>Stage 2 - Demonstration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ up to 7 SME consortia funded (passed from Stage 1)</li> <li>✓ Duration: 9 months</li> <li>✓ up to €80,000 lump sum (per micro-consortium)</li> </ul>
<b>Stage 3 - Follow up support for innovation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ up to 7 SME consortia funded (consortia from Stage 2)</li> <li>✓ Duration: 2 months</li> <li>✓ up to €17,000 lump sum (per micro-consortium)</li> </ul>

*Table 1 AMULET Thematic Competitions – 2nd Open Call*

## 4. Support for the preparation of applications

Further information on the Open Challenges for the support of your proposal preparation will be available during the online matchmaking events. The events will explain AMULET support activities to SMEs and the opportunities and benefits it entails, answering questions that might arise from the audience:

- ✓ Explaining specific details on the process of the thematic competitions, the guidelines and criteria to compete,
- ✓ Presentation of the selected industrial challenges per theme,
- ✓ Promoting SMEs to network and start matchmaking, aiming at identifying relevant partners to work with on the development of solutions to thematic competitions.

The events will also count on the presence of external experts, end-users and other external stakeholders in the value chain.

The participation in the matchmaking events is not mandatory but recommended.

## 5. Eligibility criteria

We will check the eligibility of all applications which were submitted before the deadline via our online application form <https://amulet-2oc-h2020.fundingbox.com/>. All eligibility criteria are listed in this section of the Guide for Applicants. The projects that do not comply with those criteria will be excluded and marked as ineligible.

## 5.1 What types of activities can be funded?

The proposed activities should address the development and implementation of demonstration activities around technology and system applicable to exactly one of the Open Challenges publicly announced on 23<sup>rd</sup> of December, 2022 (available in Annex 2 and on the [website](#)) coming from one of the three types of lightweight materials (polymer-based composites, ceramic matrix composites, and light metal alloys) for four industrial markets: automotive, aerospace & aeronautics, energy, and building.

The proposed activities should have a **cross-sectoral dimension**, linking innovations coming from one material value chain or one sector to another. The proposals aiming to **reach Technology Readiness Level<sup>1</sup> (TRL) 7, starting from TRL 4-5**, are preferred.

AMULET counts on the participation of European innovative SMEs with a clear commercial ambition and a potential for high growth and internationalisation. Innovation is needed to overcome the barriers faced by the advanced lightweight materials and technologies and enable their contribution to environmental and societal challenges. AMULET's financial support to third parties comes in the form of lump sum grants. These grants offer significant opportunities for SMEs by covering the financial risks of their breakthrough ideas and therefore accelerate the time to market their innovative products, services and processes. The SMEs' ideas will answer real industry challenges, which ensures the market's relevance and future uptake.

### Open challenges

Please read the Annex 2 - Open Challenges description carefully (published on 23<sup>rd</sup> of December, 2022) to properly address the selected challenge and accurately fill out the application form. In the application form, you will need to mark the specific challenge that you will address in your proposal.

## 5.2 Who are we looking for?

The projects must be proposed by a **micro-consortium of a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 3 independent legal entities (preferably cross-border)**, including **exclusively SMEs<sup>2</sup>**, registered prior to the launch of the AMULET 2<sup>nd</sup> Open Call, established in:

- ✓ The Member States of the European Union and its Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT),
- ✓ [Associated Countries to H2020](#) or,
- ✓ The United Kingdom.

The AMULET partners CANNOT be involved in these consortia (or their affiliates or employees, permanent collaborators).

Also, the authors of challenges (challenge givers) CANNOT participate in the AMULET Open Calls.

The applicants from the AMULET 1<sup>st</sup> Open Call, who have not been selected as beneficiaries, are allowed to apply to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Open Call.

## 5.3 How to apply?

Proposals must be submitted through the AMULET Open Call microsite <https://amulet-2oc-h2020.fundingbox.com/>. Applications submitted by any other means will not be considered for funding.

<sup>1</sup> [Link](#) to TRL as defined by Horizon2020

<sup>2</sup> An SME will be considered as such if it complies with the European Commission's Recommendation 2003/361/EC. As a summary, the criteria defining an SME are: \* Headcount in Annual Work Unit (AWU) less than 250, \* Annual turnover less or equal to €50 million OR annual balance sheet total less or equal to €43 million. Note that the figures of partners and linked enterprises should also be considered as stated in the SME user guide. For detailed information check EU recommendation: [https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/sme-definition\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/sme-definition_en)



We know applying to an open call takes time and dedication, and we are grateful you take up the challenge of applying to the AMULET 2<sup>nd</sup> Open Call. Please take into consideration the guidelines below to prepare the best possible application.

✓ **Deadline date**

Make sure you submit your proposal before the **deadline** on the 27<sup>th</sup> of March, 2023, at 17:00 Brussels Time. If you submit the form correctly, the system will send you a confirmation of your submission. Get in touch with us immediately if this was not the case. Applicants are strongly recommended to start the submission process quite before the deadline in order to avoid last minute circumstances. Submitting applications after the deadline, no matter the reason, will result in rejection.

✓ **English Language**

Your proposal must be written in **English** in all mandatory parts in order to be eligible. Only parts written in English will be evaluated.

✓ **Multiple submissions**

Though applicants can submit multiple applications, one SME can receive the AMULET grant only once. If several consortia which have the same composition or the same members (1, 2 or 3) will be selected to pitch during a Jury Day, only the best proposal (decided by the 'Selection Committee') will be considered for funding.

✓ **Every question deserves your attention**

All mandatory sections of your proposal - generally marked with an asterisk - must be filled in. Make sure that the data provided is true and complete. This is crucial for us to properly assess your proposal. Conversely, any additional material that is not specifically requested in the online application form will not be considered for the evaluation.

✓ **Healthy finances and a clean sheet are a must**

We won't accept entities that are under liquidation or enterprises in difficulty according to the Commission Regulation No 651/2014, art. 2.18. Neither will we accept proposals from entities that are excluded from the possibility of obtaining EU funding under the provisions of both national and EU law or by a decision of both national or EU authority.

✓ **Absence of conflict of interest**

The existence of a potential conflict of interest among you and one or more of the AMULET Consortium partners will be taken into consideration. The AMULET Consortium partners, their affiliated entities, employees and permanent collaborators cannot take part in the AMULET programme. All cases of potential conflict of interest will be assessed case by case.

✓ **Have a European dimension:**

Your proposal should have a clear *European* dimension to fully exploit the potential of the European economy and society. The ultimate goal of AMULET is to significantly contribute to decarbonisation and resource-efficiency in the EU by boosting the role of SMEs, in which their innovations are expected to be facilitated & supported by clusters.

✓ **It is your proposal**

Your project should be based on your original work. If not, please make sure your right to use the IPR is 100% certain. Going forward, any foreseen developments must be free from third-party rights and if not, these third-party rights must be clearly stated.

✓ **Be exhaustive**

Have you answered all the sections of the form? It won't be possible to add any information after the deadline. However, you will be able to modify the form as much as you like even after the proposal is submitted, as long as it is done before the deadline.

## 6. How will we evaluate your proposal?

Our evaluation process is transparent, fair, and equal to all our participants. We expect a high number of applications, so if you want to stand out, *quality* is the way to go. What does it mean? In short, provide as many details as possible while being extremely clear and structured.

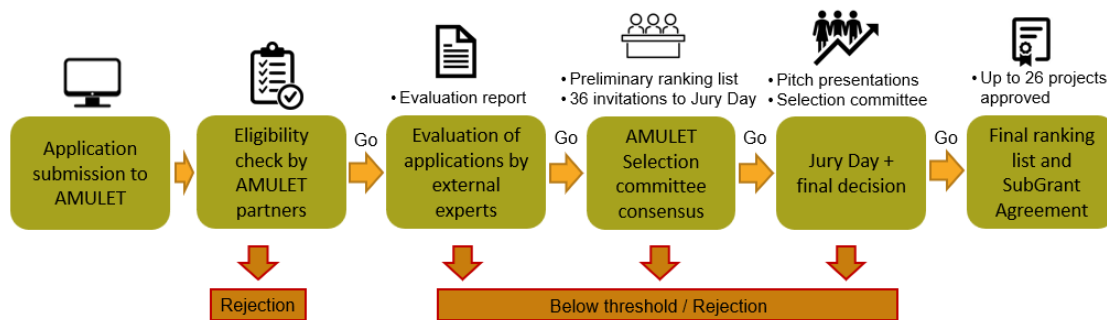


Figure 4 Overview of the applications' evaluation and selection of funded projects in AMULET

### 6.1 First Eligibility Check

The first evaluation step is about verifying some basic requirements based on the statements from your proposal. Your proposal will be admissible for the next phase if it:

- ✓ Is **complete, readable and in English** in all mandatory sections.
- ✓ Has been submitted via the online form <https://amulet-2oc-h2020.fundingbox.com/apply> within the **deadline** on 27<sup>th</sup> of March 2023, 17:00 Brussels Time.
- ✓ Is addressing one of the announced Open Challenges within the 2<sup>nd</sup> Open Call (Annex 2).
- ✓ Is submitted by a micro-consortium of 2-3 SMEs.
- ✓ Includes the properly filled declaration of honour. Read carefully the **Declaration of Honour** template included in the application form here: <https://amulet-2oc-h2020.fundingbox.com/apply>, as we will check the related submitted statements. You will not be able to change them after the deadline.

The proposals that do not comply with these criteria will be excluded. We will inform you about the results of this first eligibility check within two weeks after the deadline for submission of the application.

### 6.2 External Evaluation

**Each eligible project** will be evaluated by three **external and independent** evaluators specialised in the Lightweight Advanced Materials field.

These are the criteria they will consider to complete the evaluation:

(1). **EXCELLENCE** will evaluate:

- **Ambition.** You have to demonstrate to what extent the proposed project is beyond the **State of the Art** and describe the innovative approach behind it (e.g., ground-breaking objectives, novel concepts and approaches, new products, services or business and organisational models).

- **Innovation:** You should provide information about the level of innovation within your market and about the degree of **differentiation** that this project will bring.
- **The soundness of the approach** and credibility of the proposed methodology.

(2). **IMPACT** will analyse:

- **Market opportunity:** You have to demonstrate a clear idea of what you want to do and whether the new/improved product has market potential, e.g., because it solves a problem for a specific target customer.
- **Competition:** You have to provide information about the degree of competition for your particular product/service and if the idea is disruptive and breaks the market, i.e., the products/services to be brought to market can be clearly differentiated from the competition.
- **Commercial Strategy and Scalability:** You have to demonstrate the level of scalability of the new/improved product meaning that it is not addressed to solve a specific problem but able to be commercialised to solve a structural problem in a specific sector/process/etc.

(3). **IMPLEMENTATION** will consider:

- **Team:** You have to demonstrate your management and leadership qualities, your ability to take a concept from ideas to market, your capacity to carry through your ideas, and understand the dynamics of the market you are trying to tap into. The team should be balanced and cross-functional with a strong background and skill base.
- **Resources:** Demonstrate the quality and effectiveness of the resources assigned in order to get the objectives/deliverables proposed. One important aspect is that you make clear in the proposal that what you suggest can be developed using applicants' technical resources and solutions. The application form must include information how the grant will be distributed between micro-consortium partners. When preparing your budget split, please remember that.

**Transversal criteria** such as 'Environment and low carbon economy contribution' (real and measurable impact) 'Equal Opportunities, Gender balance & Diversity' or 'Social Impact' will be also considered by evaluators when scoring the applications.

The evaluators will score each criterion on a scale from 0 to 5:

0 = Not acceptable – The proposal fails to address the criterion, or it cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.

1 = Poor – The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.

2 = Fair – The proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.

3 = Good – The proposal addresses the criterion well, but there are a certain number of shortcomings.

4 = Very good – There are a small number of shortcomings, but overall the proposal addresses the criterion very well.

5 = Excellent – The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion with no or minor shortcomings.

Each evaluator will rank the application assigning a score from 0 to 5 for each criterion and produce an Individual Evaluation Report. No half-points are allowed (decimal points may arise during the calculation of the average of the individual assessments provided by the external evaluators but not as an individual evaluation grade). The threshold for the individual criteria score is 3.

At this stage, since the Amulet project promotes cross-border collaboration, 0.5 points will be added to each proposal with SMEs from at least 2 different eligible countries involved in the micro-consortium (after the evaluators' evaluation).

The final score will be calculated as an average of the individual assessments provided by the evaluators + 0.5 points added for cross-border micro-consortium. The maximum score possible is 15.5. The threshold for the final score is 10. Proposals in which the final score will be below 10 or in which one of the individual criteria scores will be below 3 will not be recommended for funding.

Ties will be solved using the following criteria, in the given order:

- ✓ Cross - border collaboration projects;
- ✓ Impact score;
- ✓ Excellence score;
- ✓ Implementation score;
- ✓ Gender Balance: proposals with a female in the CEO position (or equivalent position) will be prioritised to those without women or having women but not in management positions.

All applications obtaining a score above the threshold will move on to the next step.

Do note that the evaluation phase takes time as it implies a more personal, qualitative, and thus non-automated approach.

### 6.3 Consensus Meeting

The 'Consensus Meeting' will be organized with the participation of the 'Steering Committee' of AMULET plus three external evaluators (Selection Committee) and has a goal of selecting - by consensus (minimum  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority vote) - **projects that will be invited to pitch at the Jury Day**. The decisions are based on the score obtained after evaluation from the external evaluation. In all cases, we will make sure that the proposal of finalists is fully in line with the goals of AMULET in terms of securing a broad coverage of project goals.

Bear in mind that even if it is normally the best-marked applications that are selected for funding, the 'Selection Committee' may have fair reasons for objecting to the selection of a specific candidate. These reasons can relate to:

- ✓ The alignment with AMULET goals and scope;
- ✓ The ability to achieve the strongest possible impact;
- ✓ Commercial competition;
- ✓ The existence of significant ethical concerns;
- ✓ The existence of a potential conflict of interest;
- ✓ Too many solution providers for the same challenge.

In case a top-ranked application is rejected, the 'Selection Committee' will consider selecting the next best-ranked proposal.

Finally, the exact number of applications approved will be decided based on the overall quality of the applications and the 'Ranking List of Fundable Projects' will be finalised.

### 6.4 Jury Day

If your proposal has been selected following the Consensus Meeting, well done!

You will be invited to online Jury Day during which you will have the opportunity to pitch your project in front of the AMULET 'Selection Committee' composed of the AMULET Consortium Partners (Polymeris, Clust-Er Meccatronica E Motoristica, Flanders Make, Bydgoszcz Industrial Cluster, Norges Teknisk-Naturvitenskapelige Universitet NTNU and Institut Jozef Stefan and FundingBox Accelerator) and External Advisory Board (7 external experts as representatives of the advanced materials and manufacturing technologies value chains and other relevant industries and academic entities).

All the proposals included in the 'Ranking List of fundable projects' will be invited to participate in the Jury Day (planned for the 1<sup>st</sup> half of May 2023) and will be informed by email about the invitation at least 14 calendar days before the Jury Day event.

You will be requested to send a recorded presentation - as if you presented online (up to 10 minutes **video pitch** or **pitch as a pdf** with voice recorded) in advance at least 3 calendar days before the Jury Day. During the Jury Day, the recorded presentation will be displayed and at least two representatives of the applicants should explain their proposal in the 10 minutes of Q&A session in front of the 'Selection Committee'. Sending a pitch and attending the Jury Day are mandatory requirements for the finalists; not attending any of these requirements will automatically imply the exclusion of the proposal from the list.

The 'Selection Committee' will select up to 26 out of up to 36 applicants final beneficiaries taking into account the following 'Awarding criteria':

- ✓ High potential impact on the project goals,
- ✓ Vision and attitude of the team,
- ✓ Positive impact on the proponent's processes.

### FINAL DECISION:

The 'Selection Committee' at this stage composed of the AMULET Consortium Partners (Polymeris, Clust-Er Meccatronica E Motoristica, Flanders Make, Bydgoszcz Industrial Cluster, Norges Teknisk-Naturvitenskapelige Universitet NTNU and Institut Jozef Stefan and FundingBox Accelerator) and External Advisory Board will decide by consensus (or a minimum of  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority vote) the 'Pre-Selected Beneficiaries', and 'Reserve List'. The exact number of applications approved will be decided based on the overall quality of the applications.

The 'Selection Committee' agrees on the potential future beneficiaries and informs them within 3 calendar days after the Jury Day. No waiting time here, you will know right away!

Your application has successfully passed the evaluation phase: bravo! And if not, be persistent: there will be other funding opportunities which may suit - even better - your proposal and the possibilities to benefit from other AMULET support activities.

### 6.5 What's next? Sub-Grant Agreement Preparation and Signature.

In case you are pre-selected to be the beneficiary of the AMULET programme, you need to sign the Sub-Grant Agreement (SGA) with the AMULET Consortium (for the details please check our Frequently Asked Questions Document).

Before signing the Sub-Grant Agreement, you must provide documents (within one/two weeks) regarding your formal status. The AMULET Consortium will proceed to a verification of these documents to make sure you are eligible.

**Pre-selected SMEs** should be able to provide some basic information in regards to their registration and financial data. Please check the Frequently Asked Questions section to see the details.

#### Be extremely vigilant with respect to:

##### 1. The nature of the documents we request.

If the documents you provide us with do not prove your eligibility, you won't be allowed to move to the next phase of the process.

##### 2. The deadlines that we will give you to hand us these documents.

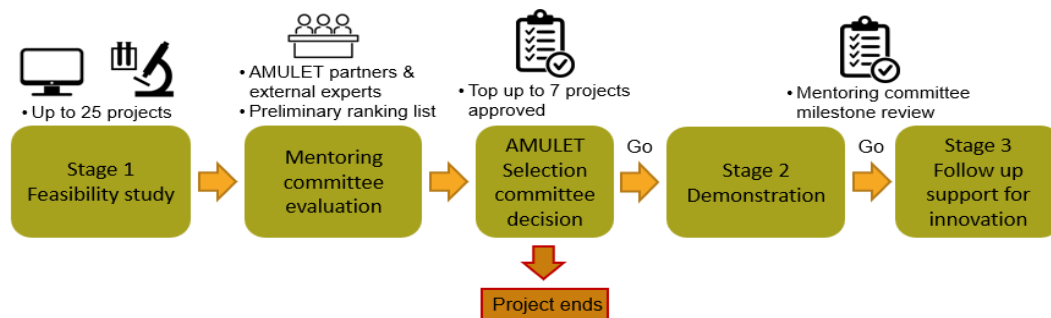
If you do not deliver the requested documents on time, without a clear and reasonable justification, we will have to exclude you from the further formal assessment. Another applicant from the Reserve list will then replace you.



## 7. Our Support Programme and Payment Arrangements

Once your eligibility has been confirmed following the formal check and the Sub-Grant Agreement signed, you would be an official beneficiary of the AMULET programme. Hence, the adventure begins and it is now high time you understand how the funding is going to be distributed.

The AMULET support programme is divided into three stages and starts with a Feasibility study (Stage 1). The projects are evaluated after the first stage and a funnel system is applied. The best evaluated projects (up to 7) are promoted to the Demonstration Stage (Stage 2). The projects have to comply with set milestones to proceed to the last stage of the support Stage 3 - Follow up support for innovation.



*Figure 5 Overview of the AMULET support stages and projects' evaluation process (2nd Open Call)*

If you manage to go through all stages, as a micro-consortium, you will receive a fixed lump sum of up to €120,000. **The maximum amount of financial support will never exceed €60,000 EU Funds per one SME.**

The lump sum is a simplified method of settling expenses in projects financed with Horizon 2020 funds. It means that you are not required to present accounting documents to prove the project-related costs incurred (e.g. invoices). However, you are obliged to demonstrate that the implementation of the project is in line with the milestones set for it. The milestones (deliverables, KPIs and ethical recommendations) will be defined and calendarised in the Individual Mentoring Plan set at the beginning of the programme and elaborated during Stage 1 (Feasibility study).

### 7.1 Supported activities

The AMULET's support programme for innovative SMEs in the lightweight field is structured in a funnel approach from Stage 1 to Stage 2. The indicative supported activities and ideas as well as the scope per stage are summarised as follows:

- **Stage 1: A Feasibility study**

**Scope:** The aim is to prepare a document that summarises the assessment of the practicality of the solution to the corresponding challenge. This could include, among others, any preliminary analysis to develop the solution, its description, market analysis and impact, organisational structure (e.g. requirements, resources needed), preparation of timeline and financial projections.

*Indicative supported activities/ideas:*

- ✓ Desk research for elaborating dedicated analysis
- ✓ Targeted interviews to get insights and relevant data
- ✓ Preliminary tests to support proof-of-concept
- ✓ Staff effort to elaborate required documentation

**Output:** The document in word format no longer than 10 pages that addresses all relevant aspects of the feasibility study and provides the plan for demonstration (Stage 2) and exploitation (Stage 3) as well as the detailed project-specific technical and business indicators

*Requirements for qualification to the next stage can be found in Section 7.3 Payment Arrangements and 7.4 Progress Evaluation Process.*

- **Stage 2: Demonstration**

**Scope:** The aim is to carry out the technical work needed to validate the solution to the challenge, following the plan designed during the Feasibility study stage. This could include the manufacturing of prototype parts and components that could then be tested in order to get experimental data that supports the verification of the solution. In the framework of AMULET, simulation and modelling could be used as well for the validation of results.

*Indicative supported activities/ideas:*

- ✓ Manufacturing of physical prototype parts and components
- ✓ Characterisation, simulation and modelling activities
- ✓ Prototype integration into the system
- ✓ Technical testing

Output: physical prototype(s) and results from the validation (report).

*Requirements for qualification to the next stage can be found in Section 7.3 Payment Arrangements and 7.4 Progress Evaluation Process.*

- **Stage 3: Follow-up support for innovation**

**Scope:** Once the prototypes are demonstrated to TRL7 in Stage 2, the aim of Stage 3 is to pave the way for successful exploitation at the market stage after completing the AMULET support programme. This includes a marketing strategy, IPR and dedicated studies in the targeted sectors (automotive, aerospace & aeronautics, energy and building) considering the commercial particularities of the three types of lightweight materials. Effort-intensive analysis, such as technology scouting and surveillance, can be also included in this stage since they could support the market entry of new solutions in a competitive way.

*Indicative supported activities/ideas:*

- ✓ Foresight studies and scenario planning
- ✓ Technology roadmapping for the targeted sector(s) and type of lightweight material(s)
- ✓ Tailored market studies including competitive analysis
- ✓ IPR strategy
- ✓ Technology scouting and surveillance.

AMULET acknowledges that these studies might fall outside the capabilities and expertise of SMEs, especially those willing to enter new market sectors and applications. Therefore, a list of potential experts from industry and academia, capable of delivering the required activities and ideas for Stage 3, will be made available to all participants for providing the required external expertise and the money from AMULET can be used to subcontract those activities. The beneficiaries can hire experts independently. Please note that the support money given for this phase 3 should only be spent for activities directly in line with the further development of your solutions. For other applications, please refer to the AMULET support and training programme: a proof of joint activities (meeting minutes, study, market strategy results...)

Output: dedicated study(ies) tailored exclusively to the solution for ensuring successful exploitation (report in word format as well as other supporting documents e.g. tables in excel file or presentations in PowerPoint format). *Requirements for qualification to finalise the Programme can be found in Section 7.3 Payment Arrangements and 7.4 Progress Evaluation Process.*

## 7.2 Eligible costs

The lump-sum grants provided in each of the stages of the support programme to selected SMEs can be used by the beneficiaries for several purposes related to the achievement of milestones. Although the lump-sum grants don't foresee the delivery of a detailed list of costs and expenses incurred by beneficiaries, AMULET partners will verify the achievement of the agreed milestones and KPIs according to the work plan proposed in the Individual Mentoring Plan and then in the Feasibility study (Stage 1) and check its coherence with the technical advancements (deliverables of Stage 2). The final technical evaluation will not include a financial assessment of costs but the beneficiaries shall keep all original documents of their expenses (e.g. timesheets, invoices, contracts) in case of an audit.

The following rules apply to eligible costs:

- ✓ Only costs incurred during the lifetime of the AMULET programme can be eligible. Expenditures incurred prior to the conclusion of the SubGrant Agreement (before the start of the programme period) are not eligible as well as those incurred after the programme period.
- ✓ SME consortia applicants will provide an indicative budget allocation per each micro-consortium partner.

The eligible costs in AMULET comprises the following:

- ✓ Personnel costs: cost hours of the SME(s) staff dedicated to solutions development during the feasibility study, demonstration and follow-up support for innovation.
- ✓ Other direct costs: includes travelling, consumables, and equipment. For the latter, standard rules on depreciation apply as well as the part of equipment costs used for the project. Costs of other goods and services are also included, e.g., protection of results, costs related to intellectual property rights, and plan for the exploitation and dissemination of results.
- ✓ Indirect costs: costs that can't be attributed directly to the project, e.g., energy costs or general administration costs. A flat rate of 25% of the direct eligible costs shall be applied.
- ✓ Subcontracting: includes tasks/services subcontracted to academic and industry experts from the targeted sectors. Subcontracting costs in the framework of the AMULET support programme might come in the form of specialised and dedicated studies, testing, certification and other tasks carried out by a provider-subcontractor via a legal agreement. Subcontracting costs are only allowed in the second (Demonstration) and third, (Follow-up support for innovation) stages of the programme and should not exceed 30% of the total lump sum grant (i.e. up to €36,000.00 for both stages).

Specifically, for Stage 3 of the support programme (Follow-up support for innovation), €17,000 should be exclusively used to purchase innovation support services from external experts.

AMULET will make available to SME consortia a pool of external experts from industry and academia, which would offer their coaching services and technical advice under the budget lines of other direct costs or subcontracting. The choice of suitable external experts is not limited to the list provided by AMULET.

## 7.3 Payment Arrangements

In short, we will carefully assess your progress and the quality of your work during Interim Reviews but we will not review your accountancy. Bear in mind that the lump sum does not release you from the obligation to collect documentation to confirm the costs under fiscal regulation.

The payments for the 3 support stages, with a funnel system, applied from Stage 1 to Stage 2 (see section 7.4), will be arranged as follows:

- **Stage 1: Feasibility study:** a fixed lump sum of up to **€23,000 per Project - up to 26 projects in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Open Call;**
- **Stage 2: Demonstration:** a fixed lump sum of up to **€80,000 per Project - up to 7 projects in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Open Call;**
- **Stage 3: Follow-up support for innovation:** a fixed lump sum of up to **€17,000 per Project - up to 7 projects in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Open Call.**

The payments will be transferred to the coordinator of the micro-consortium who will transfer the payments to the rest of the SME micro-consortium partners in tranches as stated in the Sub-Grant Agreement and the Individual Mentoring Plan. The coordinator of the micro-consortium is obliged to deliver the confirmation of the transfer of the grant to micro-consortium partners to the contractor after each Stage.

For the sake of simplicity and transparency, the Financial Support will be paid against specific Deliverables as stated in the table below:

	STAGE 1: FEASIBILITY PLAN M1- M4 up to 26 consortia		STAGE 2: PROTOTYPING/ DEMONSTRATION M5-M13 up to 7 consortia		STAGE 3: FOLLOW UP SUPPORT FOR INNOVATION up to 7 consortia
How much?	40% - up to 9,200€	60%- up to 13,800€	40%- up to 32,000€	60%- up to 48,000€	100%- up to 17,000€
Is payment due?	Month 1	Month 4	Month 7	Month 13	Month 15
Requirements ?	signature of the <b>Sub-Grant Agreement</b>	validation of the Deliverable(s) established for this stage (i.e. <b>'Proof of Concept [PoC]'</b> and <b>'Business Plan'</b> ).	validation of the Deliverable established for the mid-term stage (i.e. <b>'Validation of Results'</b>	successful conclusion and validation of the Deliverable stabilised for this stage (i.e. <b>'Prototype'</b>	successful conclusion and validation of the Deliverable established for this stage (i.e. <b>'Exploitation Plan'</b> ).

*Table 2 Tranches of Payments against specific Deliverables*

## 7.4 Progress Evaluation Process

From the up to 26 SME consortia participating and successfully finishing Stage 1, only up to 7 best ones, with the most innovative projects, will be promoted to Stage 2 and Stage 3 of the Programme.

Qualification from Stage 1 to Stage 2 and from Stage 2 to Stage 3 will be based on several criteria (as presented below in the 'Evaluation process'), reflecting the quality of agreed deliverables and performance indicators.

**Evaluation process:** The 'Mentoring Committee' (managed by a responsible AMULET partner under the theme and composed of the external technical and business mentors) will evaluate your project performance at the Milestone Review (established every time a payment is due), according to the following criteria:

- ✓ Deliverables quality - based on the Deliverables established in the 'Individual Mentoring Plan,
- ✓ Technical performance indicators - based on the KPIs established in the 'Individual Mentoring Plan,
- ✓ Business performance indicators - based on the KPIs established in the 'Individual Mentoring Plan,
- ✓ Deadline Compliance.

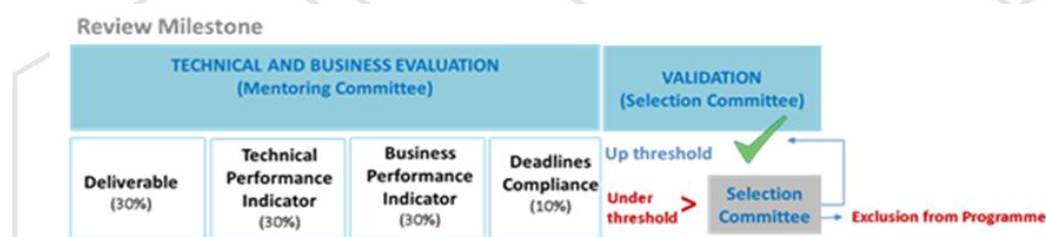
Each criterion will be scored from 0 to 10 and the weight of each one of these criteria, in the final score, will be as follows:

- ✓ Deliverable quality (30%),
- ✓ Technical performance indicators (30%),
- ✓ Business performance indicators (30%),
- ✓ Deadline Compliance (10%).

The maximum score possible is 10 points. According to the obtained final score:

- ✓ Beneficiaries over the threshold (7 points) will successfully receive the next payment and be candidates to continue in the programme.
- ✓ Beneficiaries under the threshold will be proposed, by the 'Mentoring Committee', as candidates to leave the programme. And, if this decision is finally ratified by the 'Selection Committee', they will have to leave the programme and won't receive the next payment.

The 'Selection Committee' will review and validate the 'Mentoring Committee' proposal, putting special attention to the 'under threshold' cases, if any, by taking into consideration all possible objective reasons for underperformance (i.e. external factors which might have influenced the beneficiaries' performance). The 'Selection Committee' will take the final decision, and approve the payments.



**Figure 6 Overview of the evaluation criteria and process at the support stage of AMULET**

At the end of each stage, the 'Selection Committee', in close cooperation with the 'Mentoring Committee', will decide which projects will pass to the next stage. The Criteria that the 'Selection Committee' will take into account are based on the performance of the projects evaluated in the Milestone Reviews, as described above.

Considering the progress from Stage 1 to Stage 2, the 'Selection Committee' will take into account, as well, the following criteria:

- ✓ Innovation potential at technical and business levels (projects with higher scalability and replicability to other sectors and therefore a greater impact will be promoted),
- ✓ Technological excellence and time to market opportunity (projects with higher technological excellence and shorter time to market will be promoted).

**Pass from Stage 1 to Stage 2:** the projects will be evaluated by the 'Mentoring Committee' (as described above) and the ranking list will be proposed to the 'Selection Committee' which will promote up to 7 SME consortia with the top scores to Stage 2.

**Pass from Stage 2 to Stage 3:** the projects successfully finishing Stage 2 (up threshold score) will be approved by the 'Selection Committee' to proceed to Stage 3.

A final event will be organised at the end of the project to present and promote the projects that have successfully completed the three phases of the AMULET support programme. The companies will be requested to travel and participate in this event.



## 8. Contact us

How can we help you?

If you still have any doubts regarding our Open Call process, feel free to get in touch with us:

- ✓ Ask your question in the Helpdesk space of AMULET Community at <https://spaces.fundingbox.com/spaces/i4ms-amulet>
- ✓ Send us an email to the following address: [info.amulet@fundingbox.com](mailto:info.amulet@fundingbox.com)

If ever you face any technical issues or problems, make sure you include the following information in your message:

- ✓ Your username, telephone number and your email address,
- ✓ The details of the specific problem (error messages that appeared, bug descriptions such as a dropdown list that isn't working, etc.),
- ✓ Screenshots of the problem.

## Complaints

First of all, be aware that we won't be reviewing your complaint **if**:

- ✓ It is anonymous,
- ✓ The information is incomplete,
- ✓ It is not related to the results of the evaluation of the eligibility criteria. Indeed, most of the evaluation process is run by **independent experts** in the given field. The AMULET Consortium does not interfere with their assessment.

If, after receiving the results of one of the evaluation phases you consider that a mistake has been made, resulting in the rejection of your application, you have the right to send us a complaint. You can email us in English to [info.amulet@fundingbox.com](mailto:info.amulet@fundingbox.com) including the following information:

- ✓ Your contact details (including email address),
- ✓ The subject of the complaint,
- ✓ Information and evidence regarding the alleged mistake.

## Important note:

You have **3 calendar days** to submit your complaint starting from the day after the communication was sent. On our side, we will review them within no more than **7 calendar days** from its reception. If we need more time to assess your complaint, we will inform you by email about the extension.

Please take into account that the evaluation is run by external experts and we do not interfere with their assessment, therefore we will not evaluate complaints related to the results of the evaluation other than related to the mistakes in the evaluation of the eligibility criteria.

## 9. Last but not least- Final provisions

Any matters not covered by this Guide will be governed by Belgian law and rules related to the Horizon 2020 programme and European Union grants regulations.

We are obliged to keep all the applicants' data confidential. However, to avoid any doubts, you are entirely responsible to indicate what information is confidential.

Your IPR will remain your property.

For the selected beneficiaries, the agreement will include the set of obligations towards the European Commission (for example: promoting the project and giving visibility to the EU funding, maintaining confidentiality, understanding potential controls by the EC/ECA and OLAF, providing non-confidential information/summary on the project that receives financial support).

The AMULET Consortium might cancel the call at any time, change its provisions or extend it. In this case we will inform all applicants about such change. Signature of the agreement (all partners in the micro-consortium will sign the Sub-Grant Agreement) is an initial condition to establish any obligations among applicants and any AMULET Consortium partners (with respect to the obligation of confidentiality of the application).

You didn't find what you were looking for? You may want to check our Frequently Asked Questions.

## 10. Extra hints before submitting your proposal

A proposal takes time and effort and we know it. Here a few crucial points you should read before hitting the "Submit" button in order to maximise your chances of success:

- ✓ Is your project in line with what AMULET is looking for? Not 100% sure? You can consult section **5.1** as well as the [website](#).
- ✓ Did you present your project in a way that will convince evaluators? Go back to section **6.2** if you have any doubts.
- ✓ Is your project fulfilling all the eligibility requirements described in the Guide for Applicants? Check again section **5.2**.
- ✓ Are you a SME in accordance with the [SME definition](#) of the European Union? In cases of partner or linked companies, consult the [guide of the SME definition](#).
- ✓ Are you able to cope with our signature agreement process and payment arrangements for the selected proposals? You may want to go over section **6.5** Did you check our Sub-Grant Agreement (SGA) Template? Check it [here](#).
- ✓ Do you need extra help? [Get in touch!](#)

**And as a bonus:** You can read our [R.E.C.I.P.E. for an outstanding European Funding Opportunity application](#) for additional advice. Good luck!

The content of this document represents the author's view only and is his/her sole responsibility. The European Commission and the Agency do not accept any responsibility for use that may be made of the information it contains."





Annex 1 Information clause

Annex 2 Open Challenges description

Annex 3 Call Announcement

