



Clean energy for EU islands

Call for Application of Interest to become a Follower Island of the 30 Renewable Islands by 2030

SEPTEMBER 2024

The Follower Islands programme

The Follower Islands programme constitutes part of the 30 for 2030 initiative and aims to engage at least **90 European islands** over **six months**. A short and consistent flow of activities aims to ensure active engagement of the selected islands and deliver plausible and exploitable results in a timely manner. After completion of the programme, the Follower Islands will remain in contact with the initiative and will be informed about all future activities and content produced.

More information regarding the Clean energy for EU islands secretariat and the 30 for 2030 initiative is available in Annex 1.

WHAT IS A FOLLOWER ISLAND?

A Follower Island learns from the experiences and the planned and implemented activities of the group of 30 for 2030 islands. The secretariat will assist the follower islands in different forms, enabling them to adapt these experiences to their specific conditions.

WHY BECOME A FOLLOWER ISLAND?

By joining the Follower Islands programme, an island will have access to various activities and benefits, as listed below.

- The Follower Island will benefit from capacity-building activities on selected topics delivered by the secretariat's team of experts.

- The Follower Island will collaborate closely with the 30 for 2030 islands, learning through experience sharing and interaction.
- The secretariat team of experts on selected projects will directly consult the Follower Island.
- The Follower Island will have access to all secretariat training and educational content.
- The Follower Island will become part of the CE4EUI community, providing them with contacts and networking opportunities with EU institutions, financing instruments and collaboration opportunities.

WHICH ACTIVITIES ARE PLANNED FOR THE FOLLOWER ISLANDS?

The activities in which the Follower Islands will be engaged will depend on the profile/type of each island and will be tailored based on the preferences provided during the application phase. All Follower Islands' transition team members are invited to participate in different activities.

Activity 1: *Energy planning and vision making*

Goal: The activity aims to support the Follower Islands in preparing realistic energy plans that are sufficiently integrated with the local communities and effectively communicate them to the relevant stakeholders.

Description: The secretariat will assess the energy plans of the selected Follower Islands and compile a list of questions/recommendations to support the enhancement of the plans. Consultation meetings will be organised with each of the Follower Islands based on the assessment of their energy plans.

At the end of the programme, the Follower Islands will be requested to resubmit their plans for evaluation and/or further comments.

Activity 2: *Capacity building*

The activity comprises two sub-activities that cover a wide range of learning topics and interests.

Sub-activity 2.1: Setting the ground training workshop on island energy systems (regulatory and system management).

Goal: The aim is to make the Follower Islands aware of their energy system conditions regarding regulatory and technical limitations and possibilities.

Description: The content of the studies developed by the secretariat, analysing the regulatory and energy system conditions on EU islands, will be presented. The workshop will be delivered in the form of presentations per country and per type of energy system. The participants will have the possibility to address their questions and join constructive dialogues with the secretariat members.

Sub-activity 2.2: Capacity-building activities on the selected learning topics.

Goal: The aim is to raise awareness and broaden the knowledge of the Follower Islands on specific topics of interest. The learning topics are based on those analysed during the in-person workshops targeted at the 30 for 2030 islands.

Description: Each Follower Island can choose multiple learning topics during its application. The secretariat will deliver one online workshop per learning topic comprised of a first part focusing on training content and a second part focusing on good practices from the 30 for 2030 islands. In

parallel, Follower Islands will be granted access to a knowledge-sharing platform filled with current and past resources developed by the secretariat.

Activity 3: Peer-to-peer project coaching

Goal: The aim is for each Follower Island to develop a clear project development action plan to proceed with the maturation of one project further.

Description: The secretariat will match each Follower Island with a 30 for 2030 island based on the similarities between the projects chosen by the Follower Islands and those being developed. The secretariat will assist the paired islands individually to enable peer-to-peer coaching and share best practices. This coaching will result in preparing an action plan to develop the project.

The timeline of the respective activities is described below.

Activities	Month					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Energy planning and vision making						
2. Capacity building						
3. Peer-to-peer project coaching						

Application process

SUBMISSION

The applications must be submitted online by **25 November 2024 at 23:59 (CET)** to participate in the Follower Islands programme. Each applicant must submit the following:

- Application form
- Declaration of honour of each applying organisation.

Please be aware that there will be no further opportunities to apply for the programme in the future.

Application Form

The application form is composed of three main parts:

I. Basic information on your application for participation: List the members of the island transition team in the "*Island Transition Team profile*". Provide fundamental and technical information about your island and its energy system in the "*Island profile*" and "*Island Energy System profile*".

II. Learning topics for capacity building: From the following list of learning topics, choose one or more on which the island(s) transition team will join capacity building activities.

- Effective communication and capacity-building strategies on energy and sustainability
- Energy efficiency and energy savings in warm climates

- Impacts from onshore and offshore wind energy
- Smart electricity systems for facilitating the decarbonisation of islands: demand-side management and flexibility
- Sustainable land transport: hybrid/full electric/ hydrogen/shared mobility
- Financial schemes for renewable plants and shared ownership
- Reducing the emissions related to water supply and distribution: supply, desalination, loss minimisation
- Spatial energy planning for the decarbonisation of islands: methodologies, techniques and best practices
- Sustainable marine transport and the role of ports in decarbonising energy systems
- Battery storage: available technologies, state of the market, investment, business plans

III. Projects for peer-to-peer coaching: Follower Islands will choose three projects of preference for which they would like to be paired with one of the 30 for 2030 islands for peer-to-peer coaching from the following list of standardised projects. For each one of the projects, the applicants will have to provide a title, the location and size of the project, its purpose, the work already carried out and the possible barriers faced.

Standardised projects:

- Clean Energy Transition Agenda (CETA) development
- Stand-alone rooftop PV
- Rooftop PV with BESS
- Land-based PV
- Land-based PV with BESS
- Onshore Wind
- Building energy efficiency retrofitting
- Electric mobility (fleet & charging infrastructure)
- Electrification of marine transport
- Hydrogen and alternative fuels for transport
- Energy Storage
- Flexibility/Demand response services

Declaration of honour

Each applying organisation must sign and submit A Declaration of honour to declare their compliance with all applicable national and EU-level legislation on environmental, social, health, and safety aspects.

A template is available [here](#).

EVALUATION

Procedure

The secretariat will assess each application to ensure that the minimum application requirements (check 3.2.2 Eligibility criteria) are met. Failure to comply with the requirements will lead to the rejection of the application. The secretariat can request clarifications on the application form or submit additional information to assist in assessing the application.

Following the first assessment, the secretariat and the applicant's representatives will hold a short interview session. During the interview, the secretariat can request additional information to substantiate the application.

In case of a negative outcome of the evaluation process and consequent rejection from the programme, an applicant may request an explanation in written form from the secretariat.

Eligibility criteria

The application must meet the criteria below to be eligible to participate in the Follower Islands programme. The application will not be evaluated if one of the below criteria is unmet:

1. Location
2. Beneficiaries
3. Timely submission
4. Non-cumulative award

Location

To be eligible for participation in the programme, an island must:

- Belong to one of the Member States of the European Union (EU) and/or countries participating in the LIFE programme. This means that eligible islands can belong to the Member States of the EU, the Outermost Regions (OMR) and Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT)
- Have a maximum area of 30,000 km²

The criterion applies to the location where the relevant clean energy transition projects will be realised. Some co-applicants may be based elsewhere (on the mainland or another island). However, in any case, the Follower Island programme activities must be related to the location of the applicant island.

Activities related to offshore facilities are eligible, provided their onshore connection is on an eligible island. Activities related to ferries and other marine transport are eligible, provided the vessels operate among eligible islands or between an eligible island and the mainland.

Beneficiaries

An application may be submitted by only one organisation if this is the local governing body of the applying island. The submission of applications with the participation of **more than one stakeholder** is encouraged.

There is no limit to the number of applications per island. However, it is highlighted that only one application will be selected per island. The application that includes as applicant a local governance body representing the whole of the island will be prioritised in the evaluation.

Timely submission

The complete application must be submitted via the online form by 25 November 2024 at 23:59 (CET) to be eligible for the Follower Islands call. A confirmation email will be sent to the leading organisation. The email will be introduced on the form once it has been received.

Non-cumulative award

Projects described under peer-to-peer activities should not have received support from the European Union to avoid duplicating EU funding for the same task.

Language

English is the official language used for the open call. The application form and the letter(s) of commitment written in other EU languages will be evaluated after being translated into English using translation software by the secretariat. The secretariat is not responsible for issues or misunderstandings arising from the quality of the translation.

Absence of conflict of interest

Applicants shall not have any actual or/and potential conflict of interest with the selection process or be associated with any member of the evaluation team. Any conflict of interest must be declared together with the application.

Annex 1: The Clean energy for EU islands secretariat

BACKGROUND

The Clean energy for EU islands secretariat was set up in 2018 by the European Commission in cooperation with the European Parliament. Between 2018 and 2020, the secretariat functioned as a pilot project supporting the EU-wide community of islands to transition to sustainable energy and reduce energy consumption.

The initiative's core was the Clean Energy Transition Agenda (CETA), the recommended process for a solid and inclusive energy transition on the islands. By drafting a

CETA, island communities collectively define their vision of decarbonisation in the energy system and elaborate pathways to reach it.

Following the signature of the Memorandum of Split in 2020, the second phase of the secretariat was launched in 2021 and ran for two years. The second phase built on the results of the pilot years and structured the transition support based on the methodology "Explore. Shape. Act". Since the start of the Clean energy for EU islands secretariat, 76 islands have engaged with the secretariat, half of which have concluded a Clean Energy Transition Agenda by the end of Phase II. During Phase II, the secretariat provided direct technical assistance to more than 40 island projects, ranging from regulatory advice for the involvement of local communities in the implementation of RES (Renewable Energy Sources) projects to analysis of technical challenges for the electrification of marine transport and ports to guidance on financing specific island projects. Moreover, the secretariat engaged with national, regional and local stakeholders in Member States to prepare the regulatory inventory and

identify priority regulatory barriers to a clean energy transition on the islands in seven Member States. As a result, the secretariat, in collaboration with national experts, proposed recommendations for overcoming those barriers. Technical assistance and regulatory analysis provided a clear view of the islands' challenges in their clean energy transition. Hence, Phase III is aimed at addressing those challenges.

OBJECTIVES OF THE SECRETARIAT IN PHASE III

In Phase III, the emphasis shifts further to developing and finalising a set of investment-ready and bankable projects and finding financing for those projects. The aim is to technically support 30 islands on their path to becoming 100% RES islands by 2030 and to disseminate the lessons learned to a broad group of follower islands. The 30 islands will thus be used as guiding examples for other islands on their path to a carbon-neutral future.

THE 30 FOR 2030 ISLANDS

During the third phase, the Clean energy for EU islands secretariat aims to support and showcase a pathway of actions and projects ready for funding to enable 100% renewable energy by 2030 in 30 EU islands. The comprehensive technical support package is offered to 30 selected islands and island groups over three years. A call for applications was launched on 8 June 2023, from which 30 islands and island groups were selected.