

Submitting Your Opportunity

A Step-by-Step Guide for the Blue Economy Hub

About this Guide

This document is designed to support project and business owners seeking funding support to prepare business plans, projects, or concept notes for submission to the Blue Economy Hub. You will find instructions and helpful tips to:

- Clearly state what your project aims to achieve.
- Identify any risks that might come up.
- Explain how much funding you need.

This guide is meant for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), public sector representatives, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations (CSOs), and innovators. It is a useful tool to improve your submissions, make your ideas clearer and increase your chances of getting support from the Hub.

By using this guide, you can make sure your projects are well-organized, realistic, and ready to help grow a sustainable blue economy in our region.



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Types of Submissions

Submissions are categorized as follows:

1 Sustainable Blue Economy Project

Choose this category to submit details about a specific project. This could be an existing initiative (underway or planned) that contributes to marine conservation, restoration, or sustainable use.

Purpose: Provide information about your project's goals, timeline, budget needs, partners, and expected outcomes.

2 Sustainable Blue Economy Business

Select this category if you are registering an established business operating in blue economy sectors (e.g., marine conservation, restoration, fisheries, aquaculture, blue tourism, blue tech).

Purpose: Present your company and its ongoing activities, business objectives and relevant risks.

3 Sustainable Blue Economy Concept Note

Use this category to share a key idea, proposal, or project approach not yet fully developed- such as an innovative method, a new business concept, or an idea to improve marine conservation or restoration outcomes.

Purpose: Submit your concept to get feedback and initial support.

If you would like assistance in strengthening your submission, please feel free to reach out to your island's key partners listed on the Hub or key experts across the Caribbean, to assist facilitating access to potential funding partners, technical assistance and other development opportunities.

Sustainable Blue Economy Project

View the guidelines for each subcategory in this section.

Project Details

Name of Lead Organization	Provide the full legal name of the organization submitting the project. This should be the primary entity responsible for the project's development, management, and implementation. Ensure the name matches official registration documents.
Type of Organization	Select the category that best describes your organization
Supporting Documents	Upload any relevant documentation to verify your organization's legitimacy and capacity. This may include certificates of incorporation, registration documents, licenses, or other official records.
Linked to Academic Research?	Indicate whether your project is connected to academic research, such as university-led studies, collaborations, or research initiatives.
Year of Establishment	Provide the year your organization was founded.
Thematic Focus	Select all thematic focal points for your project. Refer to the Glossary for clarification.
Project Sector	Select all business sectors for your project. Refer to the Glossary for clarification.
Country / Island of Operation	Select the location in which your project currently operates.
Target Beneficiaries	Select all target beneficiaries for your project. Refer to the Glossary for clarification.
Does the project have specific goals related to gender equality or inclusion of marginalized/vulnerable groups?	Select "yes" if your project actively promotes equitable participation and benefits for groups that may face social or economic barriers. An applicable project in this context may support inclusive growth, gender-responsive practices, or targeted opportunities for underserved communities.

Do you have existing partners?	Select “Yes” if your project is already supported by organizations that provide expertise, funding, or other forms of assistance.
Total Funding Needed	Indicate the total amount of funding your project needs to advance or reach its next stage of development. This helps the Hub match your investment needs with potential investors and relevant financing mechanisms.
Amount Requested	Specify the portion of the total funding you will be requesting on the Blue Economy Hub
Contact/ Position	Provide the name of the primary contact person for this application, along with their role or position within the organization.
Project Description	Provide a concise overview of your project, outlining its objectives, target beneficiaries, and expected outcomes. Focus on how the project contributes to sustainable blue economy development in the Caribbean.
Project Approach/ Methodology	Describe the methods, processes, and strategies your project will employ to achieve its objectives. Include information on timelines, resources, and key activities to demonstrate a clear and actionable plan.
Risk Management/ Sustainability Plan	Outline potential risks to the project and how they will be mitigated, including environmental, operational, and financial risks. Additionally, describe measures to ensure the project’s long-term sustainability, such as revenue generation, partnerships, or capacity-building initiatives.
Project Timeline/ Duration	Provide the expected start and end dates for the project, including the total duration in months or years. Outline key milestones or phases. A clear timeline helps the Hub assess project feasibility, planning, and the ability to achieve objectives within a defined period.

Sustainable Blue Economy Business

View the guidelines for each subcategory in this section.

Business Details

Business Owner Name	
Thematic Focus	Select all thematic focal points for your project. Refer to the Glossary for clarification.
Business Sector	Select all business sectors for your project. Refer to the Glossary for clarification.
Country / Island of Operation	Select the location in which your project operates.
Target Beneficiaries	Select all target beneficiaries for your project. Refer to the Glossary for clarification.
Does the business have specific goals related to gender equality or inclusion of marginalized/vulnerable groups?	Select “yes” if your project actively promotes equitable participation and benefits for groups that may face social or economic barriers. An applicable project in this context may support inclusive growth, gender-responsive practices, or targeted opportunities for underserved communities.
Technical/ Financial Partners?	Select “Yes” if your business is already supported by organizations that provide expertise, funding, or other forms of strategic assistance.
Total Value of Business	Indicate the estimated financial value of your business. This helps the Hub understand the scale of your operations and appropriately position your project for potential investment opportunities.
Investment Required	Indicate the total amount of funding your project or business needs to advance or reach its next stage of development. This helps the Hub match your investment needs with potential investors and relevant financing mechanisms.
Upload Business Plan	Upload your most recent business plan. This helps the Hub understand your business model, objectives, financial projections and overall feasibility. Accepted formats may include PDF, Word.

Business Plan Details

Company Description	<p>Provide a brief overview of your business, including its mission, core activities, and the problem it seeks to solve. Highlight the sector(s) you operate in and any relevant background that helps position your business within the Blue Economy.</p>
Value Proposition	<p>Describe the unique value your business or project delivers. Explain what differentiates your offering—whether through innovation, environmental impact, social benefits, or community relevance.</p>
Market Analysis	<p>Summarize the market you operate in. Include key customer groups, industry trends, demand drivers, and any competitors. Focus on evidence that demonstrates a clear need or opportunity for your project.</p>
Organization and Management	<p>Outline your business structure and leadership. Include key team members, their roles, and the expertise they bring. Mention any advisors or partners supporting management or operations.</p>
Products or Services	<p>Describe the main products or services your business offers. Explain how they work, who they benefit, and how they contribute to sustainable Blue Economy practices.</p>
Marketing and Sales Strategy	<p>Provide a summary of how you plan to reach your customers or beneficiaries. Include promotional strategies, sales channels, target markets, and any partnerships that support outreach.</p>
Funding Request	<p>Specify the amount of funding you are seeking and how it will be used. Outline key cost categories, such as equipment, staffing, research, operations, or expansion.</p>
Financial Projections	<p>Provide an overview of your expected financial performance over the next 1–3 years. Include revenue forecasts, key expenses, profitability assumptions, and any supporting rationale.</p>

Risk Assessment Template

How to complete this section

This section helps the Blue Economy Hub understand the potential challenges your business may face and how prepared you are to manage them. A strong risk assessment does **not** indicate that your business is risky- it shows that you have thought carefully about your operating environment and have plans to navigate uncertainties.

1 Review the Risk Level Definitions

Begin by familiarizing yourself with the criteria for Low, Medium, and High risk. This will help you select the most accurate rating for each area.

2 Assess Each Key Risk Area

For every area listed (Operations, Finance, Legal/Compliance, etc.), briefly identify:
The **main risk** relevant to your business
The **potential impact** if the risk materializes
The **risk level** based on the definitions provided.

Consider the following examples to inform your approach:

Operations

Comprise risks that could disrupt day-to-day activities, production, logistics, or service delivery. In the Blue Economy, operational risks often relate to marine conditions, equipment reliability, permitting delays, or reliance on natural ecosystems.

Main Risk Identified	Potential Impact	Risk level
Boat engine failure during routine seaweed harvesting trips.	Temporary halt in harvesting activities, reduced production levels, and delays in fulfilling orders.	Medium

Finance

Can comprise cash flow challenges, budget overruns, revenue instability, or difficulties in securing funding. Blue Economy businesses may face unique exposure due to seasonality, environmental dependencies, or reliance on grants.

Main Risk Identified	Potential Impact	Risk level
Dependence on a single donor for operational funding.	Loss of funding could halt project expansion and disrupt long-term sustainability.	High

Customers/ Clients

Relates to customer demand, client satisfaction, market acceptance, or disruptions in service delivery. For Blue Economy ventures, customer risks may include limited awareness of sustainable products or fluctuating demand.

Main Risk Identified	Potential Impact	Risk level
Low local market awareness of sustainably farmed sea moss products.	Slower sales growth and reduced revenue in early stages.	Medium

Legal / Compliance

Covers risks associated with permits, regulations, licensing, environmental compliance, and potential legal disputes. Blue Economy operations may require multiple licensing approvals.

Main Risk Identified	Potential Impact	Risk level
Delays in obtaining coastal zone management permissions.	Postponed project launch and inability to operate in designated marine areas.	High

Cybersecurity

Include data breaches, digital fraud, system outages, or unauthorized access to business systems when using digital tools for sales, communications, or monitoring.

Main Risk Identified	Potential Impact	Risk level
Weak password protocols for cloud-based customer data.	Unauthorized access leading to data loss and reputational damage.	Medium

Staff/ Human Resources

Risks related to training, recruitment, staff well-being, safety, and retention. Marine-based operations may require specialized skills and adherence to safety protocols.

Main Risk Identified	Potential Impact	Risk level
Limited trained divers available for underwater infrastructure inspection.	Operational delays and compromised safety monitoring of marine installations.	Medium

External

Stem from environmental shocks, economic fluctuations, climate impacts, or supply chain interruptions. Blue Economy ventures are particularly sensitive to weather events, ocean conditions, and global market trends.

Main Risk Identified	Potential Impact	Risk level
Extreme weather disrupting fishing and transport activities.	Reduced production, increased costs, and delayed deliveries.	High

Summary of Top Risks

Mariculture Business faces **climate risks** from hurricanes and warming waters, **disease outbreaks** threatening fish and shellfish, and **market volatility** due to fluctuating seafood prices. Managing these requires strong biosecurity, adaptive operations, and flexible market strategies to sustain resilient, profitable production.

3 Tailor Risks to the Blue Economy Context

Consider unique sector-related risks such as climate impacts, marine resource volatility, traceability requirements, regulatory changes, coastal infrastructure dependency, or community engagement complexities.

4 Be Honest and Realistic

All ventures have risks. We encourage transparency, as this helps us determine the type of support, technical assistance, or capacity building your business may benefit from.

Sustainable Blue Economy Concept Note

View the guidelines for each subcategory in this section.

Contact & Organizational Information

Name of Contact Person	Provide the full name of the person responsible for this concept note.
Position	State the applicant's role within the organization (e.g., Project Manager, Director, Founder).
Email Address	Provide a valid email that the Hub can use for correspondence and next steps.
Telephone	Include a primary phone number with country code.
Organization Address	Provide the official registered address of the organization
Country of Operation	Choose the country where the project will be implemented or where the organization is based.
Website/ Social Media	Share official online platforms.

Project Overview

Project Title	Provide a clear, descriptive title
Thematic Focus	Select all thematic focal points for your project. Refer to the Glossary for clarification.
Relevant Sector(s)	Select all business sectors for your project. Refer to the Glossary for clarification.

Gender/ Marginalized Groups

Does the project have specific goals related to gender equality or inclusion of marginalized/ vulnerable groups?	Select "yes" if your project seeks to promote equitable participation and benefits for groups that may face social or economic barriers. An applicable company in this context may support inclusive growth, gender-responsive practices, or targeted opportunities for underserved communities.
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Project Details

Rationale/ Problem Statement	Describe the issue your project aims to address, including the context, gaps, and why this matters for your community, country or region. Highlight evidence or challenges driving the need for intervention.
Project Objectives	List up to four objectives that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.
Target Beneficiaries	Select all target beneficiaries for your project. Refer to the Glossary for clarification.
Key Project Activities	Outline the main activities that will be carried out to achieve each objective.
Expected Outcomes	Summarize the tangible results or changes expected at the end of the project. Outcomes should reflect achievements towards objectives.

Partnerships

Partner Name	List any organizations or groups that formally support implementation.
Partner Role	Briefly describe each partner's contribution (e.g., technical expertise, community mobilization, research support, co-funding).

Timeline

Total Project Duration	Estimate how long the project will run from start to finish.
Key Phases/ Milestones	Provide a brief overview of the major phases of the project (e.g., planning, implementation, piloting) and associated milestone points. These should cover the full duration and align with your activities.

Budget Overview

Total Estimated Budget	State the full projected cost to implement the entire project.
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Funding Requested	Specify the amount of funding you are requesting on the Blue Economy Hub.
Other Contributions (cash or in-kind)	List any co-financing or in-kind support from partners or your organization (e.g., equipment, staff time, facilities, co-funding commitments).

Monitoring & Evaluation

Key Indicators	Identify the main indicators that will be used to track progress and measure success (e.g., number of beneficiaries trained, increase in production, improved biodiversity outcomes).
Monitoring Methods	Describe how data will be collected, monitored, and reviewed- surveys, site visits, logs, financial reports, external evaluations, etc.

Sustainability Plan

How will the project be sustained post-funding?	Explain how activities, benefits, or operations will continue after the grant or payment period ends. This may include revenue models, local ownership, partnerships, policy support, or integration into existing businesses.
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Glossary of Terms

Thematic Focus

01	Blue Economy Innovation
Development and application of new technologies, business models, or practices that advance sustainable marine economic activities.	
02	Both Conservation and Restoration
Projects combining protection and active restoration measures.	
03	Climate Adaptation and Resilience
Initiatives enhancing the ability of marine and coastal systems, communities, or economies to adapt to climate change impacts	
04	Marine Conservation
Activities aimed at protecting and preserving marine ecosystems and biodiversity.	
05	Marine Restoration
Efforts to rehabilitate or restore degraded marine environments, habitats, or species.	

Project Sector

01	Blue Carbon Sequestration
Projects capturing and storing carbon in marine vegetation and sediments.	
02	Blue Finance and Investment
Financing mechanisms and investment initiatives targeting sustainable marine projects.	
03	Coastal and Marine Tourism
Tourism activities in marine areas.	
04	Coastal Protection and Restoration
Measures to safeguard coastlines from erosion, flooding and to restore natural defenses.	
05	Community Resilience and Adaptation:
Strengthening coastal communities' capacity to withstand environmental and economic changes.	

06	Coral Reef Rehabilitation
Restoration and support of coral reef ecosystems.	
07	Cultural Heritage and Marine Arts
Protection and promotion of marine-related cultural and artistic resources.	
08	Ecosystems Services Valuation
Assessing and quantifying the economic value of benefits provided by marine ecosystems.	
09	Education, Training and Capacity Building
Programs to develop skills and knowledge for blue economy stakeholders.	
10	Insurance and Risk Management
Financial products and strategies managing risks in marine sectors.	
11	Mariculture and Aquaculture
Sustainable cultivation of marine organisms for food and industry.	
12	Marine Biotechnology and Blue Innovation
Biotechnological applications and innovative solutions derived from marine resources.	
13	Marine Conservation and Biodiversity
Protecting marine species diversity and ecosystem integrity.	
14	Marine Pollution Prevention
Activities to stop or reduce pollutants entering the marine environment.	
15	Marine Protected Areas Management
Establishment and stewardship of designated ocean areas for conservation.	
16	Marine Renewable Energy
Energy generation from ocean-based renewable sources like wind, waves, and tides.	
17	Marine Spatial Data and GIS
Use of geospatial data and tools for marine resource management.	

18	Marine Spatial Planning
Strategic approaches to managing marine spaces effectively, promoting sustainable development while protecting marine environments.	
19	Maritime Transport and Infrastructure
Shipping, ports, and related infrastructure designed for economic and environmental sustainability.	
20	Ocean Data, Monitoring and Technologies
Collection and use of marine data and technologies for decision-making, innovation and building awareness.	
21	Ocean Health and Monitoring
Tracking and safeguarding the ecological condition of oceans.	
22	Ocean Waste Management and Circular Economy
Reducing, recycling, and managing marine waste to close resource loops.	
23	Policy, Governance and Compliance
Development of regulatory frameworks, governance mechanisms, and compliance monitoring for the blue economy.	
24	Research and Development
Biotechnological applications and innovative solutions derived from marine resources.	
25	Seagrass and Mangrove Restoration
Rehabilitation of vital coastal habitats.	
26	Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture
Responsible harvesting and farming of fish and seafood supporting ecosystem health and livelihoods.	
27	Sustainable Seafood Processing
Environmentally and socially responsible seafood processing and value addition.	
28	Sustainable Shipping and Logistics
Clean and efficient movement of goods by sea.	
29	Water Management and Desalination
Technologies and systems for sustainable freshwater supply, treatment and distribution.	

Target Beneficiaries

Target beneficiaries are specific groups of people, communities, or organizations that projects are designed to support. They are the primary recipients of the intended positive impact.

1

Academic and research institutions

Universities and think tanks generating marine science and policy knowledge.

2

Aquaculture and mariculture operators

Businesses farming marine organisms in controlled or natural environments for food, restoration or other purposes.

3

Blue economy start-ups and innovators

Emerging businesses introducing novel marine solutions.

4

Coastal households and vulnerable populations

Residents of coastal areas at social or environmental risk.

5

Community Resilience and climate adaptation groups

Organizations enhancing adaptive capacities of coastal zones.

6

Conservation and restoration organizations

NGOs and groups focused on ecosystem conservation, restoration or sustainable use.

7

Cultural heritage and creative sector stakeholders

Custodians of maritime culture and arts.

8

Data, technology, and ocean monitoring services

Providers of marine information and tech solutions.

9

Elderly populations

Elderly residing in coastal areas or impacted by marine or coast-related risks.

10

Environmental justice communities

Groups advocating against disproportionate environmental burdens.

11	General public and consumers
Broader society benefitting from marine resources and services.	
12	Government and policy institutions
Public bodies responsible for governance and regulation of marine-related topics.	
13	Indigenous and local communities
Local inhabitants with marine-dependent livelihoods or traditions.	
14	Insurance and risk management providers
Businesses offering financial risk solutions.	
15	Low income households
Low-income households are disproportionately affected by environmental degradation and climate risks, especially in coastal communities.	
16	Marine transport and shipping workers
Those employed in sea transport and logistics.	
17	Marine-dependent livelihoods
Workers dependent on ocean resources for income.	
18	Migrant and displaced communities
Migrant or displaced communities are people who relocate voluntarily or by force due to economic, environmental, or social pressures.	
19	Persons with disabilities
People with physical or cognitive impairments.	
20	Port and infrastructure authorities
Managers of maritime facilities and related infrastructure.	
21	Processing and value-addition enterprises
Companies involved in post-harvest handling and product development.	
22	Renewable energy developers and technicians
Specialists in clean energy projects.	

23	Rural and remote island communities
Populations in less developed or accessible island locales.	
24	Small-scale fishers and fishing communities
Those engaged in fishing livelihoods.	
25	Tourism operators and coastal entrepreneurs
Individuals and organizations driving marine tourism businesses.	
26	Training and technical education providers:
Entities delivering skills-building programs.	
27	Women in marine and coastal economies
Female participants and entrepreneurs in blue economy sectors.	
28	Youth and early-career professionals (ages 18-35):
Young individuals building skills, gaining experience, and entering the workforce or entrepreneurship.	