



Project Acronym: COPILOT

Project Title: Co-creating the next generation platform of PILOT and demo infrastructures, unlocking faster innovations and EU bioeconomy growth

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COLIPOT Open Calls Overview (OC1, OC2)



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Contents

1.The COPILOT objectives	3
2. Scope of the Open Calls	4
2.1 Objectives and requirements	4
2.2 Open Call tracks - eligibility	4
2.3 Open Call funding scheme	5
2.4 The COPILOT funding programme	5
2.5 Links and communication channels	6

1.The COPILOT objectives

The primary goal of the COPILOT project is to establish a reference database and network of open access pilot and demo infrastructures for the European bioeconomy, facilitating the rapid market introduction of biobased innovations. Additionally, the project seeks to unite Infrastructures, Innovators (users of the infrastructures), and Enablers (investors, finance actors, market actors, clusters & incubators, public authorities, and large companies) into a dynamic community. This community will collaborate to create the database and platform, develop and test a business plan to ensure the platform's sustainability. Given the high costs and specialized expertise required for pilot and demo equipment, open access infrastructures are the most cost-effective and efficient way to support the market deployment of biobased, industry-driven innovations. In alignment with the European Bioeconomy Strategy and Action Plan, COPILOT will create an open access pilot and demo database within a self-sustaining platform by:

- Leveraging experiences and achievements from past pioneering EU projects (Pilots4U and BioeconomyVenture).
- Encouraging co-creation dynamics within the community to develop a tailored platform for users' needs. This will include engagement and participation in COPILOT activities via three Open Calls (OC). OC1 and OC2 are detailed in this document, while OC3 will be dedicated to a Voucher Network Program focused mainly on travel allowances and will be open in a separate call.
- Providing key services, training, and matchmaking opportunities to foster collaborations within the community. These efforts aim to facilitate clearer and faster access to bioprocess scale-up in the EU for Innovators and Enablers. This will be done in close collaboration with the entire consortium, which consists of a strong pool of bioeconomy experts, ensuring the involvement of all relevant EU regions to maximize the initiative's outreach.

The **overall budget** dedicated to financing third parties within the open calls framework of the COPILOT project is **€200.000**.

The community, created as a result of the COPILOT project and its open calls, will form a scale-up ecosystem composed of three groups: innovators, infrastructures, and enablers. All members are committed to scale-up capacity building and bioeconomy growth. These three groups will be integrated into a unified community on a platform, with exchanges, connections, and matchmaking facilitated through meetups and events. These activities aim to build synergies and foster cross-collaboration.

To achieve these goals, the project partners have decided to use the Financial Support for Third Parties (FSTP) mechanism to engage with the respective groups and stakeholders. Eligible and selected entities (details provided below) will be required to perform specific actions to receive funding.

2. Scope of the Open Calls

2.1 Objectives and requirements

The main objective of the COPILOT open calls is to engage Open Access Pilot and Demo Infrastructures (OC1) and Bioeconomy Innovators (OC2). These entities will be involved into the project's activities and benefit from the community through training opportunities, study visits, and involvement in the co-creation of a Europe-wide database of bioeconomy-based open-access infrastructures. To be selected within the OC framework, entities from OC1 and OC2 must, identify their technology area, and perform several mandatory actions to contribute to project development, as detailed in the "COPILOT - Guidelines for Applicants (OC1, OC2)".

In general, the funding programme aims to facilitate the access of innovators to scale-up and growth by offering three different types of open calls:

1. Stimulation and empowerment of the PDIs through co-creation dynamics and testing of the COPILOT business model – **Call4BioPlants (OC1)**
2. Creation and cultivation of a vibrant community that harmonizes supply and demand, supported by enabling stakeholders and supporting services to ensure the proper development of bioeconomy innovations – **Call4BioInnovators (OC2)**
3. **Voucher Networking Programme (OC3)**¹ - that travel voucher program will be designed for individuals & entities (e.g.: investors, researchers, experts, RTOs) to finance their participation in COPILOT project events (such as open days, Pitch Perfect)

2.2 Open Call tracks - eligibility

The COPILOT open calls target two types of audiences:

- **Open Call 1: Call4BioPlants**

Targets Open Access Pilot and Demo Infrastructure active within the bioeconomy implemented by SMEs or RTOs. PDIs for bioeconomy defined as:

- Open access pilot and demo infrastructures offering equipment and related expertise for scale-up (TRL 4-5) and demonstration (TRL 6-7) of innovative bio-based products and processes, for a fee.
- Joint investments in equipment and expertise that can be used, for a fee, by any entrepreneur in need of scale-up.

Projects funded under the track OC1 will receive €6.000 each. Ten projects will be funded on this track.

- **Open Call 2: Call4BioInnovators**

Targets bioeconomy innovators defined as:

¹ OC3 will be open in another dedicated open call. Those documents do not bind for the OC3 requirements.

- o Start-ups, spin-offs and SMEs owning and developing innovative biobased technologies with the aim of commercialization.

Projects funded under the track OC2 will receive €6.000 each. Fifteen projects will be funded in this track.

The COPILOTS' consortium aim is to engage applicants from OC1 and OC2 with respect to diversity regarding technological² and geographical presence to ensure balance and representativity.

2.3 Open Call funding scheme

A total of €200.000 has been budgeted for open calls planned within the COPILOT project. The division of funds between planned open calls within the COPILOT project is as follows:

- **Open Call 1: Call4BioPlants:** will finance max. 10 eligible entities in the amount of €6.000 each.
- **Open Call 2: Call4BioInnovators:** will finance max. 15 eligible entities in the amount of €6.000 each.
- **Open Call 3: Voucher Network Program:** will finance max 100 eligible entities in the amount of €500 each³.

The COPILOT project will provide funding to support third-parties activities throughout the implementation of their projects. It is important to note that activities already financed by other grants are ineligible for COPILOT funding, in adherence to the principle of no double funding.

The defined funding for each project will be distributed into two installments (50% each). First one in month 2 after sub-grant agreement signature and the second in month 22 after sub-grant agreement signature.

At each stage, third parties will be required to submit a report detailing the activities carried out and outlining plans for the subsequent stage. These reports will provide the necessary justifications for COPILOT to proceed with the contracted payments.

2.4 The COPILOT funding programme

The COPILOT funding programme will be divided into the above-mentioned tracks that will be open and will last at the same time.

The COPILOT OC1 and OC2 will be open from 12 August 2024 to 10 October 2024 (17:00 CET).

² Defined in "COPILOT Open Calls Annex 1: Guidelines for Applicants (OC1, OC2)"

³ Just an informative note. The dedicated OC3 will be launched later in a project.

After the submission deadline, COPILOT will initiate the evaluation and selection stage, consisting of an internal evaluation. The internal evaluation will check all submitted applications against the defined eligibility criteria. Applications that do not meet the criteria will be notified and receive a rejection letter. Eligible applications will move on to the next evaluation level, where the interviews (if required for clarification or tiebreak) might be implemented. After establishing the final ranking, the selected applications will be notified to enter the contract preparation and signature stage. All other applications, including those that do not meet the threshold or are kept on a reserve list, will be notified.

Two **informative webinars** (10th and 24th September 2024) about open calls and the COPILOT project have been scheduled for interested applicants to participate. The links and the details will be shared under these links:

[COLIPOT Open Calls Webinar 10th September 2024](#)

[COPILOT Open Calls Webinar 24th September 2024](#)

2.5 Links and communication channels

Here, we have gathered all necessary information important for applicants:

- [Website with all necessary documents](#)
- [Application form on F6S page](#)
- [Discussion section in case you have any further questions](#)