

PROJECT

POLREC



Guide for Applicants

- Networking Open Call -





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2. Abbreviations, acronyms and European Commission disclaimer

Table 1 – List of POLREC partners

Partner short name	Partner	Country
POL	Polymeris	FR
CEN	Centro Tecnológico da Indústria de Moldes, Ferramentas Especiais e Plásticos	PT
MAV	Clúster de Materials Avançats de Catalunya	ES
PCD	Plast Center Danmark	DK
WFG	Wirtschaftsförderung Raum Heilbronn GmbH	DE



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the European Union**

The POLREC project is funded by the European Commission Joint Cluster initiatives for Europe's recovery (Euroclusters) under the Single Market Programme (SMP COSME) Grant Agreement number 101074434. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or EISMEA. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.





3. Introduction of POLREC project

The POLREC project is a collaborative project between the 4 European clusters and a technological centre: [Polymeris](#) (coordinator), [CENTIMFE](#), [Cluster Mav](#), [PCD/DMN](#) and [WFG](#). It started on the 1st of September 2022 and will end on the 31st of August 2025. It is funded by the European Commission Joint Cluster initiatives for Europe's recovery (Euroclusters) under the Single Market Programme (SMP COSME) Grant Agreement 101074434.

It focuses on sustainable development and recycling of high and low value polymers as a contribution to the objectives of the European Green Deal aiming at zero CO₂ emissions in 2050 and to increase the European strategic autonomy on raw materials for polymer production.

During the project period of 3 years the consortium will explore how an intensified cluster and business network collaboration across borders and across sectors can meet this challenge and exploit the international business opportunities related to this topic.

3.1 Basic information about POLREC activities

POLREC will support companies on the following topics:

1. Network to improve the resilience of the EU industrial ecosystems by developing value chain interlinkages in the EU Single Market.
2. Innovate for strategic autonomy to build capacity in the most critical supplies of their ecosystems.
3. Adopt processes and technologies to reinforce transformation into a greener and more digital economy.
4. Train to foster up- and re-skilling of the workforce whilst attracting talents.
5. Go international to boost access to global supply and value chains.
6. Outreach to attract economic actors, mainly small or medium sized enterprises (SMEs), beyond Euroclusters' locations.

One of the means to provide this support is an open calls mechanism aiming to support European SMEs in developing solutions related to polymer & elastomer recycling, training on recycling technologies, networking and matchmaking in Europe and beyond.

3.2 Basic information about the POLREC Networking Open Call

POLREC Networking Open Call provides financial support to SMEs working in polymers & elastomers industries on recycling solutions (mechanical, chemical and digitalisation of process & traceability).

Under this open call, the POLREC consortium will select up to 67 SMEs for the networking sub-grant for a maximum total budget of 36.500 EUR

The call will open on January 15th 2025 at 10:00 AM CET and close on 14th of March at 18:00AM CET. The link to the application documents and to submit your proposition can be found on the [Cluster Submission Platform](#).





The table below presents the financing opportunities.

POLREC Open call	Max budget per SME for events EU and SMP countries (Norway, Turkey etc.)	Max budget for oversea** Events per SME	Max number of funded SMEs	Opening & closing dates	Max amount available for sub-grants in €
Networking	1-day attendance: 500 EUR 2 days attendance: 1,000 EUR 3 days attendance: 1,500€*	Up to 5-days attendance: 2,500*	67	15 th of January – 14 th of March 2025	36 500€

*day = full day of 6-8 hours meeting/networking

**Oversea countries are geographically distant nations that generally require intercontinental flights to reach. These countries are located outside of Europe and do not include nearby regions such as North Africa or Western Asia. The preferred countries are: Canada, USA, Mexico, Brazil, India, Japan, South-Korea.

The list of identified events in 2025 is as follows. Applicants can either choose an event from the list or propose another event if it contributes to the objectives of polymer & elastomer recycling and takes place before 15th July 2025.

An SME can submit a maximum of two applications to attend two different events (either in EU and SMP countries or oversea).





Date	Fair	Country	Location	Link
22.01. - 23.01.2025	Pharmapack	Paris	France	https://www.pharmapackeurope.com/en/home.html
04.02. - 06.02.2025	International Trade Fair for Plastics Industry	Poland	Warsaw	https://warsawplastexpo.com/en/
04.02. - 06.02.2025	MD&M West	USA	Anaheim	https://www.mdmwest.com/en/home.html
25.02. - 26.02.2025	KPA - Kunststoffprodukte Aktuell	Germany	Ulm	https://www.kpa-messe.de/messeprofil/
04.03. - 06.03.2025	JEC World 2025	France	Paris	https://www.jec-world.events/
11.03. - 14.03.2025	Plastimagen	México	Ciudad de México	https://www.plastimagen.com.mx/en
12.03. - 13.03.2025	Americana	Canada	Montreal	https://www.reseau-environnement.com
12.03. - 13.03.2025	Circular Valley Convention 2025	Germany	Düsseldorf	https://cvc-duesseldorf.com/
12.03. - 13.03.2025	Plastics & Rubber	Spain	Barcelona	https://www.plastics-rubber.es/
13.03. - 14.03.2025	C2C Congress 2025	Germany	Berlin	Startseite - International Cradle to Cradle Congress (c2c-congress.org)
01.04. - 02.04.2025	PRSE 2025	Netherlands	Amsterdam	www.prseventeurope.com
15.04. - 18.04.2025	Chinaplas 2025	China	Shenzhen	https://www.chinaplasonline.com/
29.04. - 30.04.2025	Forum Plasturgie 2025	Canada	Quebec	https://cqfa.quebec/evenement/forum-plasturgie-2025/
06.05. - 09.05.2025	Moulding Expo	Germany	Stuttgart	https://www.messe-stuttgart.de/moulding-expo/en/
07.05. - 08.05.2025	EMPACK	Germany	Dortmund	https://www.empack-messen.de/
13.05. - 15.05.2025	KPA - Kunststoffprodukte Aktuell	Germany	Bad Salzflun	https://www.kpa-messe.de/messeprofil/
13.05. - 15.05.2025	KUTENO	Germany	Bad Salzflun	www.kuteno.de
13.05. - 15.05.2025	CIRPLEX (Circular Plastics Experience Summit)	Austria	Klagenfurt	https://www.kaerntnermessen.at/veranstaltungen/cirplex-circular-plastics-experience-summit-alpen-adria/
15.05. - 17.05.2025	IFAT Eurasia	Turkey	Istanbul	www.ifat-eurasia.com
20.05. - 22.05.2025	PlastecEast (6 Expos together)	USA	New York	https://www.imengineeringeast.com/en/show-brands/plastec.html
20.05. - 23.05.2025	Plastpol	Poland	Kielce	https://www.targikielce.pl/plastpol
20.05. - 22.05.2025	PlastecEast (6 Expos together)	USA	New York	https://www.imengineeringeast.com/en/show-brands/plastec.html
27.05. - 30.05.2025	Greenplast Milano	Italy	Milano	www.greenplast.org
03.06. - 04.06.2025	EMPACK	Germany	Hamburg	https://www.empack-messen.de/
25.06. - 27.06.2025	IFAT Brasil	Brasil	Sao Paulo	https://ifatbrasil.com.br/

4. Scope and Expectations

The POLREC Networking Open Call is designed for SMEs in the plastics, rubber, and composites industries, helping them to develop international strategies and expand into new markets beyond their national scope through participation in business fairs, exhibitions, and matchmaking events. Targeted SMEs may operate in various sectors, including transport and mobility, construction, renewable energy, digital and electronics, health, consumer goods, and industrial or food packaging.

In summary, this open call seeks to foster international connections between SMEs, companies, and R&D centers within and beyond the polymer industry.

The applicants are expected to attend the chosen event and identify at least 3 new contacts related to polymer recycling and attend minimum 2 meetings with new potential business partners (technology provider, service provider, customer, supplier, start up, and others).

These contacts and meetings are to be documented in the Final Activity Report. Further Expectations are explained in details under 4.1.





4.1 Type of actions supported

The applicant can either choose an event from the list or propose another event if it contributes to the objectives of polymer & elastomer recycling and takes place before 15th July 2025. The types of events described below are within the scope of obtaining a grant.

- Business/ trade fairs & exhibitions in Europe and outside Europe (Oversea)
- Conferences, conventions and forums in Europe and outside Europe (Oversea)
- Matchmaking events in Europe and outside Europe (Oversea)

The proposed event can target SME's across various sectors and should lead to raising awareness within the polymer and elastomer industry towards recycling solutions and enhancement of the product life cycle. The event duration for events in Europe must be minimum 1 full day. A full day means a working day of 6-8 hours including lunch. For events to overseas** (explanation see page 5) countries the event duration must be minimum of 3 days.

In addition, the applicant will have to participate in one online event, organised by a POLREC project partner, with the aim to further network and provide valuable industry and networking inputs, with a duration of approximately 2 hours.

The applicant is also expected to complete the final activity report, which evaluates their experience during the event and outlines the potential impact on their future work. This three-page document includes multiple-choice questions and sections for written comments. Furthermore, the quantity and significance of contacts established must be recorded for the comprehensive evaluation of the POLREC Project.

5. Eligibility conditions

To be eligible, applicants must satisfy all the following conditions:

1. Be a legal entity.
2. Be a small or medium sized enterprise (SME) in accordance with the [SME definition of the European Union](#). An SME self-assessment tool is available [via this link](#).
3. Apply as an individual organization.
4. Be a SME located in one of the Single Market Programme (SMP) associated countries
 - EU Member States
5. Other countries which participate in Single Market Programmes/ COSME trend : chrome-extension://efaidnbmninnibpcjpcglclefindmkaj/https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/smp/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation_smp_en.pdf For the networking grant: the participant representing the SME in the networking event must be over 18 years old.
6. Implement or plan to implement the recycling of polymer/elastomer wastes or digital solutions for recycling processes.

The SMEs targeted by this call can cover various sectors, such as: transport and mobility, construction, renewable energy, digital and electronics, health, consumer goods, industrial and food packaging.

Applications must be written in English and complete in all the parts indicated in application form. Only parts written in English will be evaluated.





SMEs that are under liquidation, in financial difficulty, or 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 are not eligible to apply for funding.

6. Funding conditions

Successful applications will receive the requested financial contribution in the form of a lump sum according to the following schedule:

- A final payment of 100% of the requested contribution will be provided after approval of the final activity report on the attendance of the networking event by the applicant. The approval will be made by the POLREC consortium.

In the approval process POLREC will check the achieved results mentioned in the final activity report submitted by the SME. Furthermore, a physical or remote meeting between the funded SME and POLREC partner(s) may be organised to better qualify the results. If an SME receives funding, it commits to participating in an online event organized by the consortium and to sharing insights on a specific topic related to its expertise.

7. Networking Open Call calendar for evaluation and implementation of activities

Step	Dates
Period open for submissions of proposals	15 January – 14 March 2025
Evaluation & Selection of winners	14 March- 21 March 2025
Notification letters sent out to candidates	21 March – 26 March 2025
Signature of the Financial Agreements (FA)	Before 4th April 2025
Activity Report (template will be available on the submission platform)	1 month after the end of the event (events have to take place before July 15 th 2025).
Final payments of the total sub-grant upon approval of the final activity report on the networking event attended.	After approval payment will be processed within 10 days.





8. Application process

Applicants must submit their proposal for POLREC Networking Open Call on the [Cluster Submission Platform](#) by logging in the platform and filling-in the required fields. If the applicant does not already have an account on this platform, it must create one to access to the application form. Once logged in, the applicant must complete the questions required by the platform and click on “Validate and Submit” at the end of the application process to submit its application.

Applicants will receive an e-mail confirming that their application has been successfully submitted. Applications to the POLREC Networking Open Call have to be submitted exclusively via the Cluster Submission Platform.

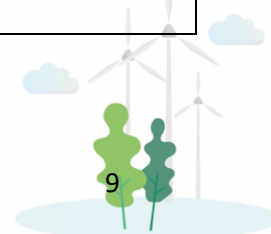
No other documents are needed at this stage of the application process.

9. Evaluation and selection

Each application will be assessed by 1 POLREC project partners according to the following criteria.

9.1 Evaluation Criteria for the Networking grant

Criteria	Weighting score	Maximum note	Description
1. Network	10%	5 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicant is a member of one of the following networks if you are located in Denmark, France, Germany, Spain or Portugal: Centimfe, DMN, MAV, Polymeris or WFG (5 points) Applicant is located outside of the POLREC's partners countries (Denmark, France, Germany, Portugal, Spain) (5 points)
2. Relevance of the event	50%	5 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the event meet the POLREC objectives? Does the event meet the objectives of the company applying for the sub-grant? How can this event support innovations in the company applying for the sub-grant? Does the event have potential of exploring new sales markets for the company applying for the sub-grant? Does the event have potential of exploring new purchasing markets for the company applying for the sub-grant?
3. Relevance of stakeholders	40%	5 points	<p>Information about the stakeholders present at the event:</p> <p>Are the stakeholders from different countries than the company applying for the sub-grant? (1 point)</p> <p>Is there potential for new clients/customer/purchasing relationship building? (1 point)</p>





			<p>Is there potential of strengthening existing business relationships? (1 point)</p> <p>Is the event you are attending outside of your company's head office location? (1 point)</p> <p>Does the event help your company to overcome supply chain disruptions or assist your company in solving a specific problem? (1 point)</p>
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The meaning of the number of points is as follows:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| 5 | Exceeds expectations |
| 4 | Good expectations |
| 3 | Moderate expectations |
| 2 | Needs development |
| 1 | Below expectations |

The final note of each application will be calculated as an average of the individual assessment provided by each evaluator. Half points are also possible and will be awarded accordingly.

In order to be considered for receiving the sub-grant the threshold is 8 points out of the 15 total maximum points. Each criterion has a specific weighting score as described in the table above. The applications with the highest weighting score will be selected within the limit of the available budget, in descending order. In case of equal scores, priority will be given to applications from SMEs located outside the POLREC's partners' countries. Obtaining the threshold does not guarantee that the application will receive funding.

9.2 Information to the applicants

Following the evaluation phase, the applicants will be informed about the outcome of the evaluations. The evaluation results will be sent to the main applicant's e-mail address associated with the application according to the open call calendar described in section 7 of the Guide for Applicant:

- A rejection letter in the event of the failure of the application.
- Or a notification letter for successful application. The instructions for the next steps will be described.

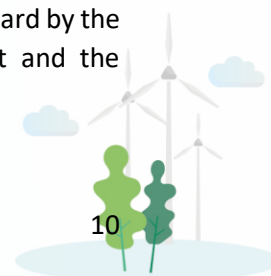
9.3 Complaint procedure

If after receiving the evaluation results an applicant disagrees with the result, a complaint can be sent (in English) to the project coordinator's e-mail (roxane.girard@polymeris.fr) within 3 working days following the official receipt of the evaluation result. The following information must be included:

- contact details and name of the application
- the subject of the complaint
- information and evidence regarding the alleged breach.

In case a complaint is received, a re-evaluation will only be carried out if there is evidence of a shortcoming affecting the final decision on whether to fund the proposal.

The Review Committee will consist of the project coordinator - Polymeris and Wirtschaftsförderung Raum Heilbronn GmbH. They will examine the complaint on the basis of the information brought forward by the applicant, decide whether the complaint is justified or not and will inform the applicant and the consortium on the decision taken.





If the complaint is considered justified, the Review Committee will notify 1 POLREC project partner, different to the one which has done the initial evaluation, and ask him to re-evaluate the application and specifically the assessment part, subject to the complaint. The evaluator will then provide the Review Committee with an updated assessment. The final decision on the complaint will be communicated by the Review Committee to the applicant in writing within 7 working days from the date of submitting the complaint.

10. Signature of financial agreement and payment of the grant

The winning applicants selected for funding will firstly have to provide an administrative document proving that they are an SME to confirm their eligibility as well as the details of the bank account on which the funding will be transferred. Applicants will have a maximum delay of 10 working days after receiving their notification letter to provide the requested documentation.

The POLREC Consortium will proceed to verification of these documents to make sure the selected applications are eligible in a delay of 15 working days.

10.1 Financial Agreement signature

If all eligibility conditions are met and confirmed, the SMEs selected for funding will be invited to sign a Financial Agreement with the POLREC partner Wirtschaftsförderung Raum Heilbronn GmbH (WFG) for the networking grant

This Financial Agreement details all rights and duties of the SMEs funded in the framework of the POLREC Networking Call.

10.2 Payment procedure

The full amount of funding will be provided to the applicant no later than 10 working days after receipt and approval of the Final Activity report. Further details will be found in the Financial Agreement.

10.3 Implementation and reporting

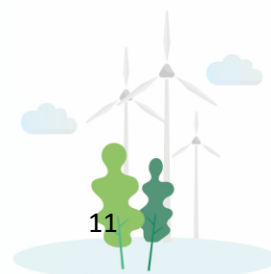
The awarded applications will visit the respective event they have chosen to participate in. The applicants have to fill out the Final Activity report.

The beneficiaries must keep the original documents of their expenses in case of an audit for a period of at least 5 years after the end of the POLREC project (at least until end of August 2030).

11. Helpdesk

For any enquiries regarding information and/ or clarification about the present call, please contact one of the POLREC National Contact point listed:

- Denmark: dwb@plastcenter.dk
- France (coordinator) : europe@polymeris.fr
- Germany: anders@wfgheilbronn.de
- Spain: clusterdematerials@outlook.es
- Portugal: tania.mendes@centimfe.com





Applicants located in other EU countries are invited to contact POLREC's coordinator should they have any question on the application process. Support in finding a service-provider located outside the partner's countries cannot be guaranteed.

12. Confidentiality, GDPR protection & intellectual property rights

A full list of applicants will be prepared containing their basic information for statistical purposes and clarity, which will be also shared with the European Commission for transparency.

The applicants' list will not be public but will serve as statistics in project communication materials.

To process and evaluate proposals, the POLREC consortium will need to collect personal and industrial data. The POLREC project coordinator will act as a Data Controller for data submitted through the Cluster Submission platform. [The Cluster Submission platform](#)'s system design and operational procedures ensure that data are managed in compliance with The General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR). Each applicant will accept the Cluster Submission platform terms to ensure coverage.

The final list of the awarded projects and beneficiaries will be made public, including name of the projects, abstract, legal name of the companies, sector, country/region of origins, results of the project and duration of the projects.

For dissemination and use of results generated through the financial support from POLREC, the SMEs must credit the POLREC project through proper citation and appearance of the POLREC logo and EU Logo, including the proper citation: "This project is funded by the European Commission Joint Cluster initiatives for Europe's recovery (Euroclusters) under the Single Market Programme (SMP COSME) grant agreement number 101074434".

13. Double funding:

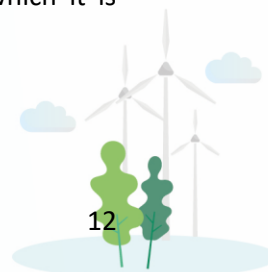
"The SME applicant cannot apply for and/or receive funding outside of ELBE EUROCLUSTER for a similar project that could lead to a potential double funding of the same action. The ELBE EUROCLUSTER Consortium may carry out the necessary control actions with other SMP Eurocluster Consortia and other EU-funded projects to verify that there is no double funding ongoing".

14. Financial Capacity

"The SME applicant must have the financial capacity to carry out the actions described in their proposals and to properly manage the financial support granted to them.

Each SME must be in alignment with the following situations:

- ✓ Is no bankrupt or being wound up, is not having affairs administrated by the courts, has not entered into an arrangement with creditors, has not suspended business activities, is not the subject of proceedings concerning those matters or is not in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- ✓ Is in compliance with its obligation relating to the payment of social security contributions and the payment of taxes, in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which it is established;
- ✓ Is not subject to a conflict of interest in connection with the grant".





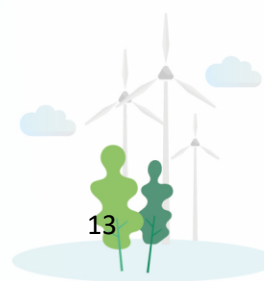
PROJECT INFO

Grant Agreement	Project 101074434 — POLREC
Programme	Single Market Programme (SMP COSME)
Call	SMP-COSME-2021-CLUSTER
Topic	SMP-COSME-2021-CLUSTER-01
Type of action	SMP Grants for Financial Support
Project Title	Supporting a green and resilient Europe through POLymer RECYcling
Project starting date	1 st September 2022
Project end date	31 st August 2025
Project duration	36 months

PROJECT CONSORTIUM



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