



BIOSTARS

Interreg
Euro-MED



Co-funded by
the European Union



APPLICANT GUIDELINES

BIOSTARS Youth Innovators Call Everything you need to know before applying

<https://biostars.interreg-euro-med.eu>





Before you apply

Please read these Applicant Guidelines carefully before completing the Application Form.

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Application period

7 September / 31 October 2026

Application language

Applications may be submitted in the local language of each BIOSTARS territory.

1. Welcome to the BIOSTARS Youth Innovators Call

The BIOSTARS Youth Innovators Call is your opportunity to develop an innovative idea or early-stage project and turn it into an initiative with real impact.

If you are 35 or under and want to contribute to a more sustainable, resilient and innovative rural future, we encourage you to apply.

Whether you are a student, researcher, entrepreneur or simply someone with a promising idea, this call will help you connect with other young innovators from across the Mediterranean and become part of the BIOSTARS Youth Platform.

Through this initiative, BIOSTARS aims to identify, support and promote the next generation of young rural innovators, helping them transform innovative ideas into real opportunities for rural communities.

2. About BIOSTARS

BIOSTARS is a European project co-funded by the Interreg Euro-MED Programme that brings together six rural territories across the Mediterranean to promote rural innovation, bioeconomy and youth entrepreneurship.

The project aims to strengthen rural innovation ecosystems by supporting collaboration between public organisations, research centres, businesses, entrepreneurs and young people. Through innovation, knowledge sharing and cooperation, BIOSTARS seeks to create new opportunities for rural communities while contributing to a greener, smarter and more resilient future.



As part of this project, the **BIOSTARS Youth Platform** has been created to engage young people in rural innovation and entrepreneurship. The **BIOSTARS Youth Innovators Call** is one of the main activities of this platform, offering young innovators the opportunity to develop their ideas, receive mentoring and training, connect with other innovators across the Mediterranean and gain international visibility.

3.Objectives of the Call

The **BIOSTARS Youth Innovators Call** aims to identify, support and connect young people with innovative ideas and early-stage projects that can contribute to a more sustainable future for rural communities.

Through this call, BOSTARS seeks to:

- **Identify** talented young innovators with ideas or early-stage projects related to rural innovation, bioeconomy, sustainability and entrepreneurship.
- **Support** the development of promising initiatives by providing access to training, mentoring, networking opportunities and international visibility through the BOSTARS Youth Platform.
- **Connect** young innovators from different Mediterranean territories, encouraging collaboration, knowledge exchange and the creation of a strong community of rural innovators.
- **Promote** innovative solutions that contribute to more resilient, sustainable and attractive rural communities.

4. Who can apply?

The **BIOSTARS Youth Innovators Call** is open to **young people aged 35 or under** who have an innovative idea or an early-stage project (**up to two years old**) and want to contribute to the future of rural communities.

You can apply:

- **As an individual.**
- **As a team**, provided that the team is led by at least one person aged 35 or under.

Applicants may be students, researchers, young entrepreneurs, innovators, members of informal groups or anyone with an innovative idea that fits the objectives of the call.

To be eligible, applicants must **live in, or be economically or operationally active within**, one of the following BOSTARS partner territories:

- **ES Aljarafe-Doñana (Andalusia, Spain)**
- **GR Amyntaio (Western Macedonia, Greece)**
- **IT Subequana Valley (Abruzzo, Italy)**
- **HR Lovas (Eastern Croatia)**
- **CY Athienou (Larnaca, Cyprus)**
- **BA Hadžići (Sarajevo Canton, Bosnia and Herzegovina)**



5. What kind of projects are we looking for?

We are looking for **innovative ideas and early-stage projects** that can make a positive impact in rural areas.

Whether you are developing a new concept or have already started your project, we encourage you to apply if you believe it can contribute to the future of your territory.

Your idea or project should:

- Be at the **idea, prototype or early business stage**. Existing projects must be **up to two years old**.
- Contribute to a **more sustainable, innovative and resilient rural territory**.
- Address **at least one** of the BIOSTARS Priority Areas listed below.
- Have the potential to create a **positive environmental, social and economic impact** in rural communities.

BIOSTARS Priority Areas

Your idea or project should relate to **one or more** of the following areas:

- 💡 Rural Innovation
- 🌱 Bioeconomy
- 🌍 Sustainability
- ♻️ Circular Economy
- ⚡ Renewable Energy
- 🌿 Green Transition
- 🍽️ Sustainable Food Systems
- 🌳 Nature-based Solutions
- 💻 Digital Innovation for Rural Areas (*within the bioeconomy framework*)
- 🚀 Youth Entrepreneurship
- 👏 Social Innovation

6. Why should you apply?

If selected, you will become part of the **BIOSTARS Youth Platform**, an international community that connects young rural innovators from across the Mediterranean.

You will receive the **BIOSTARS Youth Innovators Pack**, a tailored support programme designed to help you develop your project, expand your network and increase its visibility at European level.

The BIOSTARS Youth Innovators Pack includes:

- 🎓 **Training** through the BIOSTARS Toolbox and exclusive online learning sessions.



- **Mini-incubation and mentoring** to support the development of your idea or project.
- **Boost your Idea Programme**, including sessions on European funding opportunities and communication strategies.
- **Networking** with young innovators from the six BIOSTARS partner territories.
- **International visibility** as a BIOSTARS Youth Ambassador through the project's communication channels.
- **Participation in the BIOSTARS Final Conference in Sarajevo**, where you will present your project, exchange experiences and connect with other innovators.

Please note: Some activities included in the BIOSTARS Youth Innovators Pack will be delivered in **English**. However, applications may be submitted in the applicant's local language, and **English language skills are not part of the evaluation process**.

7. How to Apply

Applying to the **BIOSTARS Youth Innovators Call** is simple. You do not need a perfect business plan or a fully developed company to apply. We are looking for **innovative ideas and early-stage projects** with the potential to create a positive impact in rural areas.

To apply, simply complete the **BIOSTARS Application Form** before the submission deadline.

The form will ask you to provide information about:

- yourself (or your team);
- your proposal;
- its current stage of development;
- the BIOSTARS Priority Area it addresses;
- the expected impact on your rural community;
- your motivation for joining BIOSTARS.

You may also include **optional supporting materials**, such as representative photos or a short video introducing yourself and your project.

Language

Applications may be submitted in the **local language** of each BIOSTARS partner territory.

Submission Deadline

Applications must be submitted **no later than 31 October at 23:59 (local time)**.

Late applications cannot be considered.



8. Evaluation Criteria

All eligible applications will be evaluated using a **common evaluation framework** developed by the BIOSTARS partnership.

To ensure a **fair, transparent and consistent** selection process, applications will be evaluated independently within each BIOSTARS partner territory using the same evaluation criteria.

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Criterion	Weight
Relevance to BIOSTARS priorities	30%
Innovation and competitive advantage	25%
Potential impact on the local community or rural territory	20%
Idea feasibility and implementation capacity of the team	15%
Scalability and sustainability	10%

The application with the highest overall score in each BIOSTARS territory will be selected as the **Territorial Youth Innovator**.

9. Selection Process

After the submission deadline, all eligible applications will be evaluated by the **BIOSTARS partner responsible for the relevant territory**, using the common **BIOSTARS Evaluation Criteria**.

The selection process will follow these steps:

- 1. Submit your application.** Complete and submit the **BIOSTARS Application Form** before the application deadline.
- 2. Territorial evaluation.** All eligible applications will be evaluated independently within each **BIOSTARS territory**.
- 3. Selection of the BIOSTARS Territorial Youth Innovator.** The highest-scoring application in each BIOSTARS territory will be selected as the **BIOSTARS Territorial Youth Innovator**.
- 4. BIOSTARS Youth Innovators Pack.** The six selected Territorial Youth Innovators will join the **BIOSTARS Youth Platform** and receive the **BIOSTARS Youth Innovators Pack** described in **Section 6**.
- 5. BIOSTARS Final Conference – Sarajevo.** The six Territorial Youth Innovators will present their projects, exchange experiences and represent their territories during the **BIOSTARS Final Conference** in Sarajevo.
- 6. BIOSTARS International Youth Innovator.** Following the project presentations, an international jury will select the **BIOSTARS International Youth Innovator**.



10. Timeline

Activity	Indicative Date
Launch of the call	7 September 2026
Application period	7 September – 31 October 2026
Evaluation of applications	November 2026
Announcement of selected participants	End of November 2026
Virtual Mini-Incubation Programme	January – February 2027
Boost your idea Programme	February 2027
BIOSTARS Final Conference (Sarajevo)	May 2027

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11. Communication and Data Protection

The information provided in the **BIOSTARS Application Form** will be used exclusively for the management and implementation of the **BIOSTARS Youth Innovators Call** and related **BIOSTARS Project** activities.

Personal data will be processed in accordance with the applicable data protection legislation and will not be published or shared without the applicant's prior consent, except where necessary for the implementation of the **BIOSTARS Project**.

Selected participants may be invited to take part in communication and dissemination activities related to BIOSTARS, including:

- Publication on the **BIOSTARS Youth Platform**.
- Features as **BIOSTARS Inspiring Projects**.
- Stories shared through the **BIOSTARS LinkedIn Community**.
- Interviews, photographs and promotional videos.
- Participation in project events and dissemination activities.

Participation in these communication activities will always be subject to the applicant's prior consent.

Language

Some activities included in the **BIOSTARS Youth Innovators Pack**, including training sessions, mentoring, networking activities and the **BIOSTARS Final Conference**, may be delivered in **English**.

However:

- Applications may be submitted in the applicant's **local language**.
- **English language skills are not part of the evaluation process.**



12. Need Help?

If you have any questions about the **BIOSTARS Youth Innovators Call**, the application process or your project idea, please contact the **BIOSTARS partner responsible for your territory**.

We will be happy to answer your questions and help you throughout the application process.

Email: [Insert local partner email]

Website: <https://biostars.interreg-euro-med.eu>

LinkedIn: [BIOSTARS project](#) LinkedIn Community and [BIOSTARS Youth Platform](#)

We look forward to receiving your application and discovering your ideas!