

Grant Agreement Number: 101249723, Project URL: <https://aenaon-project.eu/>, Funding Authority: European Cybersecurity Competence Centre (ECCC), Call Identifier: DIGITAL-ECCC-2024-DEPLOY-CYBER-07-LARGEOPER



Ex-Ante cybersecurity Federated Digital Twin-based Cyber Range and managed security services for offshore wind farms

Annex 1

Version 1.0

AENAON OPEN CALL OVERVIEW

JULY 2026

This document is published in the context of and for the objectives of the AENAON project. AENAON is funded by the European Union under the DIGITAL Europe Programme, Grant Agreement No. 101249723. Views and opinions expressed are, however, those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Cybersecurity Competence Centre. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

Grant Agreement Number: 101249723, Project URL: <https://aenaon-project.eu/>, Funding Authority: European Cybersecurity Competence Centre (ECCC), Call Identifier: DIGITAL-ECCC-2024-DEPLOY-CYBER-07-LARGEOPER

Table of Contents

- 1 The AENAON Project
- 2 AENAON Open Call Objectives and Requirements
- 3 AENAON Open Call Funding Scheme
- 4 AENAON Open Call Funding Programme
- 5 Support to Applicants and Contact Information
- 6 AENAON Open Call Documentation and Templates

1 The AENAON Project

AENAON aims to reinforce the cyber-resilience of offshore wind installations and their interconnected grid-energy infrastructures. The project is establishing a Federated Digital Twin-based Cyber Range Platform, an interactive cyber range training programme and a set of cybersecurity preparedness support (ex-ante) services, including penetration testing, threat and risk assessment, risk monitoring and cyberattack-management support.

AENAON brings together cybersecurity, digital-twin, energy and offshore-wind expertise to support realistic testing, training and validation. Its Open Calls will enable organisations outside the consortium to use, test, validate and extend AENAON capabilities in operationally relevant environments.

AENAON capability areas

- ☐ Federated Digital Twin-based Cyber Range Platform for realistic IT/OT environments and cyber-threat scenarios.
- ☐ Interactive cyber range training and scenario-based exercises tailored to offshore wind operational realities.
- ☐ Cybersecurity preparedness support services, such as vulnerability discovery, penetration testing, threat and risk assessment, and risk monitoring.
- ☐ Validation, integration and enhancement of cybersecurity tools and services in offshore wind and related critical-infrastructure settings.

2 AENAON Open Call Objectives and Requirements

AENAON will implement two complementary Open Call rounds providing Financial Support to Third Parties (FSTP). The calls are intended to broaden participation, validate project results in realistic settings and generate transferable evidence that strengthens cybersecurity preparedness and resilience across the offshore wind ecosystem.

Open Call 1 - Content enrichment, integration and targeted validation

Open Call 1 will focus on enriching, integrating and testing AENAON capabilities. It is expected to support actions such as the development of sector-specific cyber-threat and vulnerability scenarios, testing environments and simulations, and the validation or enhancement of cybersecurity tools and services using AENAON assets.

Open Call 2 - Scaling, broader validation and ecosystem deployment

Open Call 2 will build on the results and lessons learned from the first round. It will focus on broader validation, scaling and ecosystem-level deployment, including cross-entity collaboration, advanced threat scenarios, coordinated resilience approaches and wider operational integration across interconnected systems and supply chains.

Grant Agreement Number: 101249723, Project URL: <https://aenaon-project.eu/>, Funding Authority: European Cybersecurity Competence Centre (ECCC), Call Identifier: DIGITAL-ECCC-2024-DEPLOY-CYBER-07-LARGEOPER

Primary objectives

Validation: Validate AENAON technologies, services and training capabilities with external stakeholders in realistic offshore wind and related critical-infrastructure environments.

Integration and enhancement: Support the integration, testing, improvement or extension of AENAON tools, services and platform capabilities.

Uptake and impact: Increase adoption, replication and exploitation of AENAON results and generate measurable sectoral value.

Collaboration: Foster cooperation among offshore wind operators, supply-chain actors, technology providers, cybersecurity specialists, research organisations and other relevant stakeholders.

Who can apply?

Subject to the final conditions of the relevant Open Call, eligible applicants must be legally established in one of the 27 Member States of the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein or Norway. Any additional third country may participate only where it is expressly confirmed as fully associated with the Digital Europe Programme for Specific Objective 3 – Cybersecurity and Trust and is included in the final ‘**AENAON Open Call 1 – List of Eligible Countries.**’

Eligible applicant profiles may include:

- Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and start-ups
- Large enterprises and technology providers
- Cybersecurity service providers
- Offshore wind operators, manufacturers and supply-chain actors
- Universities and research or technology organisations
- Small consortia combining complementary expertise

Applicants established in countries associated with the Digital Europe Programme only for Specific Objectives 1, 2, 4 or 5 are not eligible under this Open Call.

For consortium applications, every participating legal entity must independently satisfy the applicable country-eligibility requirements. If any consortium member is established in an ineligible country, the entire proposal will be declared ineligible at the eligibility-check stage and will not proceed to quality evaluation.

The definitive list of eligible countries is provided in the document “**AENAON Open Call 1 – List of Eligible Countries**”, published as part of the official Open Call package.

Important: AENAON Grant Agreement beneficiaries and their affiliated entities are not eligible for AENAON FSTP funding. Each participating legal entity must also comply with the applicable country-eligibility, ownership-and-control, exclusion, ethics, security, data-protection and no-double-funding requirements.

Expected proposal characteristics

- ☐ Direct alignment with the scope and objectives of the relevant AENAON Open Call.
- ☐ A credible and sufficiently mature technical approach for using, integrating, validating, testing or scaling AENAON capabilities.
- ☐ A realistic work plan with clear roles, milestones, deliverables, risks and mitigation measures.

Grant Agreement Number: 101249723, Project URL: <https://aenaon-project.eu/>, Funding Authority: European Cybersecurity Competence Centre (ECCC), Call Identifier: DIGITAL-ECCC-2024-DEPLOY-CYBER-07-LARGEOPER

- ☐ Measurable expected outcomes and a convincing pathway to uptake, replication or wider ecosystem impact.
- ☐ Compliance with all eligibility, legal, ethical, cybersecurity, confidentiality and data-protection requirements.

3 AENAON Open Call Funding Scheme

A total Financial Support to Third Parties envelope of EUR 4.1 million is reserved for the two AENAON Open Call rounds. The indicative allocation is EUR 2.1 million for Open Call 1 and EUR 2.0 million for Open Call 2. Any amount not committed under Open Call 1 may be reallocated to Open Call 2, subject to the applicable rules and budget availability.

Funding parameter	AENAON provision
Total FSTP envelope	EUR 4,100,000
Indicative Open Call 1 allocation	EUR 2,100,000
Indicative Open Call 2 allocation	EUR 2,000,000
Funding form	Lump-sum sub-grant
Funding rate	50% of the eligible budget of each sub-project
Maximum support	Up to EUR 100,000 per participating legal entity, cumulatively across both Open Calls
Implementation period - Open Call 1	8 months
Implementation period - Open Call 2	10 months
Payment schedule	30% at contracting/onboarding; 40% after accepted mid-term outputs; 30% after accepted final outputs

Cumulative ceiling: The EUR 100,000 maximum applies to each legal entity across both Open Call rounds, whether the entity participates as a single applicant, coordinator or consortium member. Funding previously awarded under an AENAON Open Call reduces the amount that may be awarded to the same entity in a later round.

Performance-linked payments: Payments will be linked to the achievement and acceptance of contractual milestones, deliverables, reports, KPIs and other supporting evidence. Payments may be suspended, reduced or recovered in cases of non-performance or non-compliance.

Where the financial support requested by the next-ranked proposal exceeds the remaining budget available under the relevant Open Call, AENAON may offer funding limited to the remaining available amount. The applicant will be informed in writing and may either accept the reduced amount and submit a proportionately revised scope, work plan, budget, milestones and deliverables, subject to AENAON approval, or withdraw from the contracting process.

4 AENAON Open Call Funding Programme

The AENAON funding programme follows an open, competitive and traceable process from publication to project closure. The same overall lifecycle applies to both rounds, with refinements introduced in Open Call 2 on the basis of lessons learned from Open Call 1.

- I. **Publication and applicant support:** The call package is published through the official AENAON channels and the EU Funding & Tenders Portal. Applicants have access to the same documentation, FAQs and clarifications.
- II. **Proposal submission:** Applicants submit the required forms, declarations and supporting documentation by the published deadline using the official submission channel.

Grant Agreement Number: 101249723, Project URL: <https://aenaon-project.eu/>, Funding Authority: European Cybersecurity Competence Centre (ECCC), Call Identifier: DIGITAL-ECCC-2024-DEPLOY-CYBER-07-LARGEOPER

- III. **Admissibility and eligibility checks:** Applications are checked for timely submission, completeness, use of official templates, legal eligibility, call-scope alignment and compliance with mandatory conditions.
- IV. **Independent evaluation:** Eligible proposals are assessed by independent external experts against the published Excellence, Impact and Implementation criteria.
- V. **Ranking and selection:** Proposals meeting all thresholds are ranked by final weighted score and selected within the available call budget.
- VI. **Contracting and onboarding:** Selected applicants complete legal and financial checks, agree milestones and deliverables, sign the Sub-Grant Agreement and complete onboarding.
- VII. **Implementation, monitoring and closure:** Sub-projects receive technical support and are monitored against milestones, deliverables, KPIs and acceptance criteria until final assessment and closure.

Evaluation framework

Criterion	Open Call 1	Open Call 2	Minimum score
Excellence	30%	30%	3/5
Impact	30%	40%	3/5
Implementation	40%	30%	3/5

Proposals must achieve at least 3 out of 5 for each individual criterion and an overall weighted score of at least 3.33 out of 5. Funding is awarded according to ranking and available budget. The complete evaluation rules and tie-break procedure will be described in the Guidelines for Applicants.

Indicative timetable

The exact calendar dates will be confirmed in the official documentation for each Open Call. The methodology currently foresees the following project-month schedule:

Open Call phase	Indicative timeline
OC1 - Design and preparation	January – June 2026
OC1 - Publication and applicant support	July – August 2026
OC1 - Submission Period	1 September – 31 October 2026
OC1 – Admissibility and eligibility checks	Preliminary administrative checks may take place during the submission period; final admissibility and eligibility checks will begin after the submission deadline.
OC1 - Evaluation and selection	November – December 2026
OC1 - Implementation and monitoring	January – August 2027 (8 months)
OC1 - Assessment and lessons learned	September 2027
OC2 - Preparation and refinement	June – July 2027
OC2 - Publication and applicant support	August – September 2027
OC2 - Submission and eligibility checks	September 2027
OC2 - Evaluation and selection	October – November 2027
OC2 - Implementation and monitoring	December 2027 – September 2028 (10 months)
Final assessment and reporting	October – November 2028

Submission portal: The official Good Grants submission link will be published in the Open Call section of the AENAON website <https://aenaon-project.eu/>

Grant Agreement Number: 101249723, Project URL: <https://aenaon-project.eu/>, Funding Authority: European Cybersecurity Competence Centre (ECCC), Call Identifier: DIGITAL-ECCC-2024-DEPLOY-CYBER-07-LARGEOPER

5 Support to Applicants and Contact Information

The AENAON consortium will provide transparent and equal technical and administrative support to applicants throughout the submission period. Clarifications of general relevance will be consolidated and published through the official Open Call channels so that all applicants have access to the same information.

- **Open Call documentation:** The call text, Guidelines for Applicants, application templates, eligibility rules, evaluation criteria and key contractual conditions will be available through the official AENAON Open Call webpage.
- **Frequently Asked Questions:** Questions and clarifications relevant to all applicants will be published in a consolidated FAQ or clarification log.
- **Information sessions:** Webinars or information sessions may be organised during the submission period. Details will be announced on the AENAON website and communication channels.
- **Technical and administrative helpdesk:** Applicants may submit questions through the dedicated Open Call contact channel within the deadline specified in the Guidelines for Applicants.

General inquiries: info@aenaon-project.eu

Open Call webpage: <https://aenaon-project.eu/>

Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the complete Open Call documentation before submitting a proposal, particularly the eligibility and admissibility requirements, evaluation methodology, funding conditions and submission instructions.

6 AENAON Open Call Documentation and Templates

The following table mirrors the expected call package structure.

Document	Purpose
Annex 1 - Open Call Overview	Concise overview of the AENAON project, the relevant Open Call, funding conditions, programme and applicant support
Annex 2 - Guidelines for Applicants	Detailed instructions on eligibility, admissibility, scope, application, evaluation, funding, contracting, monitoring and applicant support
Annex 3 – AENAON Technical Proposal Template	Official form for submission of applicant, technical, impact, implementation and budget information
Annex 4 - Sub-Grant Agreement Template	Template agreement setting out the rights, obligations, milestones, deliverables, payments, reporting and compliance requirements
Annex 5 - Declaration of Honour	Mandatory declaration covering eligibility, exclusion, accuracy of information and compliance commitments
Annex 6 - Consortium and Partner Declaration(s)	Where applicable, declarations confirming consortium composition, roles and compliance with Open Call conditions
Annex 7 - Ownership and Control Declaration	Mandatory information supporting the ownership-and-control assessment for each participating legal entity
Annex 8 - No Double Funding Declaration	Declaration that the same costs or deliverables are not funded through another public source
Annex 9 – IPRs Background and Declaration	Declaration that enables the AENAON consortium to assess the intellectual property and third-party rights at proposal stage
Additional templates, as applicable	Bank account details, legal entity information, ethics/security forms, budget breakdown, technical annexes and reporting templates.

Grant Agreement Number: 101249723, Project URL: <https://aenaon-project.eu/>, Funding Authority: European Cybersecurity Competence Centre (ECCC), Call Identifier: DIGITAL-ECCC-2024-DEPLOY-CYBER-07-LARGEOPER