



GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS

TRUBLO OPEN CALL 3

CLOSING DATE FOR PROPOSALS:

30TH MARCH 2022, 17:00 CET



*This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020
Research and Innovation programme under grant agreement n° 957228*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. THE TRUBLO PROJECT.....	4
2. OVERVIEW OF TRUBLO OPEN CALLS.....	5
2.1 The TruBlo Action	5
2.2 TruBlo Programme	6
2.3 TruBlo Research Focus Overview	8
2.4 What are the Call Topics to be Addressed in the focus of TruBlo?.....	9
2.4.1 Topic: Trust and reputation models on blockchains	9
2.4.2 Topic: Proof-of-validity and proof-of-location.....	10
2.5 TruBlo OPEN Call 3.....	12
2.5.1 Phase 1 Innovation: 26/05/2022 – 28/02/2023.....	12
2.5.2 Phase 2 Progress: 01/03/2023 – 31/08/2023.....	14
3. MODALITIES FOR APPLICATION.....	15
3.1 What type of projects will be ELIGIBLE?.....	15
3.2 What happens after the submission of proposals?.....	15
4. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA.....	15
4.1 Types of Applicants	16
4.2 Eligible countries	16
4.3 Language	17
4.4 Proposal submission.....	17
4.4.1 Multiple submissions.....	17
4.4.2 Compliant due to a technical error of the TruBlo Online Submission Service	18
4.5 Confidentiality and Deadline	19
4.6 Conflict of Interest.....	19
4.7 Other	19
5. OPEN CALL EVALUATION PROCESS	19
5.1 Proposal evaluation and access to TruBlo Funding	20
5.1.1 Check of Proposal Eligibility.....	20
5.1.2 Proposal Evaluation	21
5.1.3 Scientific Misconduct and Research Integrity	23
5.2 The Negotiation Process.....	23
5.3 Monitoring Process of phases.....	24



6. FINANCIAL SUPPORT PROVIDED	25
6.1 Indicative distribution of funds.....	25
6.2 Summary of funding per type of beneficiary	27
6.2.1 Origin of the Funds.....	28
7. PREPARATION & SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS	28
8. APPLICANTS COMMUNICATION FLOW	29
8.1 General Communication Flow.....	29
8.2 Appeal procedure	29
9. SUPPORT AND TECHNICAL INFRASTRUCTURES	29
9.1 Technical Support Services	30
9.1.1 ALASTRIA Network.....	30
9.1.2 European Observatory against Disinformation Platform.....	30
9.2 Business and Innovation Support	31
9.3 Technical Knowledge Support and Training.....	33
10. SUPORT TO APPLICANTS.....	34
11. TIMELINE	34
12. ANNEXES.....	35
13. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS.....	35
13.1 IPR Ownership of the sub-granted projects	35
13.2 Communication obligations.....	35



1. THE TRUBLO PROJECT

The TruBlo project has the vision to nurture and facilitate beyond the state-of-the-art research on blockchain technology which will lead to more scalable blockchain based solutions and applications which will contribute to ensuring the exchange of trustworthy and reliable content on social networks and media. To achieve this, the TruBlo project will implement a series of open calls that will target both academic and R&D companies research teams inviting them to define and implement small scale research projects on two related use cases. TruBlo's open call process will ensure an open, inclusive, and broadly participatory innovation scheme through which the participating teams from all over Europe will have the chance to innovate on Decentralised Ledger Technologies and blockchains towards the direction of content integrity and trustworthiness, and identity/privacy management.

Selected third parties that will be chosen to continue further to the Progress Phase will advance their developments towards MVPs and innovative, disruptive business models (see Obj6), which will be further validated through the TruBlo community ecosystem (see Obj5) of stakeholders from the media industry. The two use cases of the project have been selected in such a way to allow a significant impact to both the private and public sector. By increasing the trust within the content on blockchain and finding new ways to automate trustful interaction between users and content from social media, the project will cause significant impact in providing better control of the citizens' data, more trustworthy content on the Internet, transparency and auditability of the user interactions in NGI. Through the TruBlo funding, at least 45 teams across Europe will provide high-end research results and validated MVPs in the area of blockchains bringing thus Europe in the forefront position globally. To perform this vision the project gathers six partners with complementary skills in order to implement these objectives, as described in table 1.

Partner	Acronym	Country
WORLDLINE IBERIA SA	WLI	Spain
INSTITUTE OF COMMUNICATION AND COMPUTER SYSTEMS	ICCS	Greece
ATHENS TECHNOLOGY CENTER - ANONYMI BIOMICHANIKI EMPORIKI KAI TECHNIKI ETAIREIA EFARMOGON YPSILIS TECHNOLOGIAS	ATC	Greece
DEUTSCHE WELLE	DW	Germany
F6S NETWORK LIMITED	F6S	Ireland
CONSORCIO RED ALASTRIA	ALASTRIA	Spain

Table 1. TruBlo consortium members

The TruBlo project is set to attain the following objectives:

Objective 1: To nurture and facilitate breakthrough and beyond the state-of-the-art research results on blockchain technologies in the area of social networks and media.

Objective 2: To implement a series of three open calls that will enable the selection of the most promising and scientifically excellent teams to research and innovate on blockchain technologies and applications.

Objective 3: To provide added value through consolidating the research outcomes of the open calls and to provide knowledge transfer activities within academia and industry for wider uptake.

Objective 4: To offer a set of supporting services that will contribute as added value to third parties.

Objective 5: To create an ecosystem of stakeholders who will guide the participating teams, SMEs and entrepreneurs in order to have a continuous interaction and close relation with academia, industry, standardisation bodies and development communities.

Objective 6: To enable innovative blockchain-based business models for the media industry and and provide an extensive replicability and best practices framework.

2. OVERVIEW OF TRUBLO OPEN CALLS

2.1 THE TRUBLO ACTION

TruBlo - Trusted and reliable content on future blockchains, is a European project funded by the European Commission under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme and the call topic ICT-54. As such, it is part of the European Commission's Next Generation Internet (NGI) initiative.

As societies and human/social networks grow, people increasingly turn to digital networks for direct and far more functional ways of finding and disseminating information. In such networks, trust in the medium and disseminating information and content has inevitably to rely more and more on technologically assisted means. Blockchain technology can contribute to the evolution

of Next Generation Internet towards high levels of Distributed Trust in seamless and unobtrusive ways increasing in a transparent way the trustworthiness of content shared through future media. Trust is essential to societies, and blockchain has the potential to shift trust in people and institutions to trust in the technology that is used.

It's in this context, TruBlo project was launched in September 2020 to nurture and facilitate the creation of tools for distributed trust beyond the state-of-the-art research, by exploring and using blockchain technology. The perspective is that such work will lead to fully scalable blockchain based solutions and applications for trustable content. To achieve this, the project will implement a series of three open calls which are directed at academic teams, researchers, SMEs and startups to define and implement small scale research projects on two related focus areas. This is the third and last open call in TruBlo project. A project that has a total budget of 4,2M€ to fund such projects that are designed to reply to this expressed need from contemporary society.

The Open call is focused in two thematic:

- **Topic Trust and reputation models on blockchains:** This topic targets innovative applications, technologies, technical approaches and methodologies that increase the levels of trust in blockchain-based information exchange, with emphasis on user generated content on the Internet and social media, considering also data from IoT infrastructures;
- **Topic Proof-of-validity and proof-of-location:** This topic is on innovative mechanisms to increase transparency and trustworthiness of user generated genuine content. The users, as being part of a blockchain, can apply additional verification mechanisms to increase transparency, validity, and high level of trustworthiness, such as Proof- of-Location and Proof-of Validity.

This open call, as it happened in the previews two calls, will call for proposals focused on one of these two topics. The selected projects for the Open call 3 should have potential to entail a substantial advance in the state of the art, deliver results with the potential to create higher research, social and economic impacts, combined with the potential to generate new value into the media & internet market.

Following the spirit of the H2020 Call ICT-54 *Blockchain for the Next Generation Internet*, the TruBlo Research and Innovation Action encourages open-source software and open hardware design, open access to data, standardisation activities, access to testing and operational infrastructure as well as an IPR regime ensuring interoperability, reusability of results, lasting and sustainable impact.

2.2 TRUBLO PROGRAMME

To fully leverage the potential benefits of Blockchain/DLTs to foster trust in internet information exchange and content, TruBlo aims to empower the innovation potential of European tech research teams, startups and SMEs by providing access to **specialised knowledge, technology, capital and markets**.

The TruBlo programme aims to leverage the diverse engaged communities (representing scientific and market stakeholders) potential and, through three open calls, stimulate the technology researchers, startups and SMEs to participate in the TruBlo programme where they will have access to technology framework and support to generate new value with the initial research concepts. The TruBlo programme is divided into 2 stages: INNOVATION and



PROGRESS. Each stage is associated with a specific technology framework and services package to accelerate and enhance the development of new products and services that foster trust in internet information exchange and content.

Selected applicants will enter a 9-months **INNOVATION Stage (Phase 1)**. From the initial beneficiaries of Phase 1 (up to 15 projects), a subset of 3 beneficiaries will be retained for **Progress Stage (Phase 2)** according to excellence criteria and will further elaborate the concept proposed in Phase 1, as it's illustrated on Image 1, below.

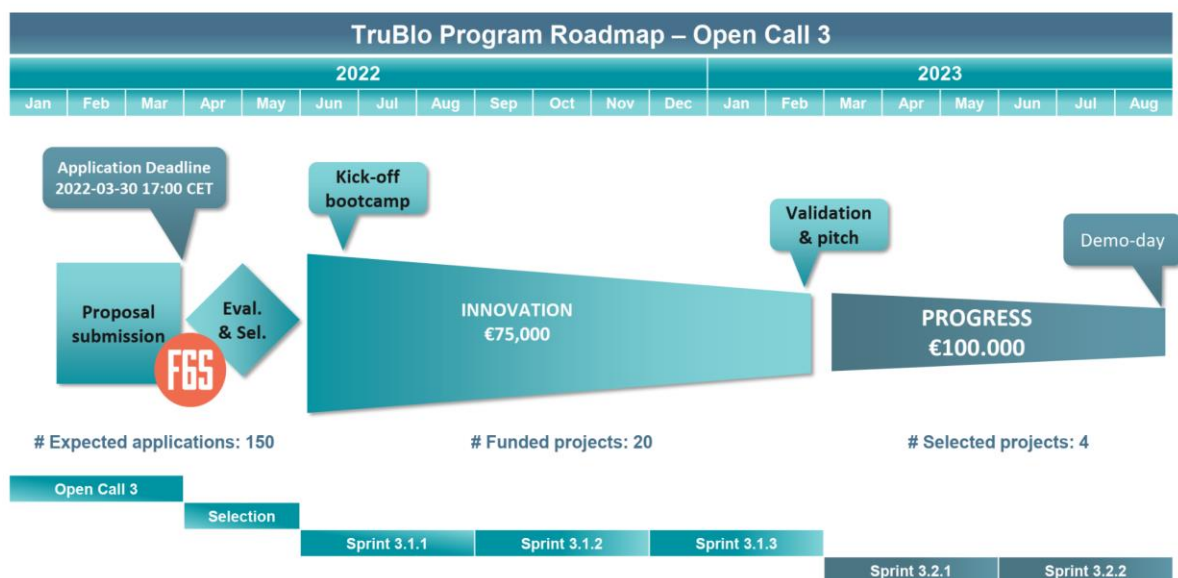


Image 1. TruBlo description of phases and sprints and correspondent budget

Each phase is detailed at the overall work plan presented in section 2.2 and section 4. Each phase comprises a set of activities that qualify for financial support. All the funds disbursed will be based on concrete results and not administrative justifications. The fund to third-parties will depend on the phase that each third-party will be able to reach.

The development of blockchain technology is young and it still must address several challenges in terms of infrastructure development of either hardware and software to reach a fully scalable blockchain based solutions and applications for trustable content.

Therefore, there is the aim to invite the teams in the proposals to dedicate time to indicate in a specific section what is their level of knowledge and understanding on the technology, either they are or not using or have use or not already a public blockchain infrastructure indicating which one and with what purpose, or a private blockchain infrastructure indicating which one and with what purpose. Moreover, the invitation is extended to highlight they scientific interest to prompt research on any topic related to the infrastructure like: onchain algorithms, cryptography, off-chain-on-chain APIs, Digital Identity, verifiable credentials or wallet development, interoperability, or any other topic related to the blockchain implementation that can drive to perform a scientific impact and a potential paper publication.

In case of lack of knowledge or experience in the technology it is important to highlight the studies done to believe that the blockchain infrastructure can lead to the envisaged application for trustable content. The program will address the needs of the team by helping to map the solution within a Framework of Research and suggest a group of assumptions to be prototyped within the development of the solution when using the infrastructure or AlastriaID.

Particularly, for the research challenges per se the teams can access "ANNEX 3.2 Refining research challenges and direction"¹ in order to obtain a deeper understanding on the pool of research areas that TruBlo is currently interested in.

2.3 TRUBLO RESEARCH FOCUS OVERVIEW

During the Innovation phase the teams are expected to deliver an architecture paper indicating the blockchain infrastructure initial that they are targeting to use. It is important to highlight the team experience and knowledge on the technology and what are the assumptions to be validated related to the infrastructure that means data sources, APIs potential need, what are the need of use on-chain transactions, how are going to be build the front-end off-chain interfaces with users if there are required, what will be the need to include APIs usage, what type of data will be required and type of smart-contracts that will be envisaged.

Within the scientific research framework, the teams will be asked to describe within written assumptions what are the expected infrastructure challenges they are targeting to validate, and what could be the expected results, and what will be the feasibility report they will make as a criteria to indicate what could be a viable product with a minimum threshold. Particularly, for the research challenges per se the teams can access "*ANNEX 3.2 Refining research challenges and direction*" in order to obtain a deeper understanding on the pool of research areas that TruBlo is currently interested in.

Therefore, at the end of this phase a plan about the prototyping exercise will be requested

That could include hardware at cloud infrastructure, software with algorithms and cryptography challenges, definition of attributes of the Alastria ID model, an UX design of the off-chain software to gain usage of the application, connectivity with sensors and with data analytics or any other off-chain software that may be required to complete the functional assumptions to deliver the final purpose of the project presented to the Open Call.

During Phase 2 Progress it will be expected to gain better understanding of the infrastructure assumptions and results of testing and implementation, documenting the research results.

Additionally, all applications must follow the "The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity"² and provide enough information to assess compliance in the proposal description annex.

¹ https://www.trublo.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Annex3.2_Refining-Research-Challenges-and-Direction.pdf

² https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/european-code-of-conduct-for-research-integrity_horizon_en.pdf

2.4 WHAT ARE THE CALL TOPICS TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE FOCUS OF TRUBLO?

TruBlo aims to showcase ground-breaking research results from selected projects that demonstrate the potential to create higher research, social and economic impacts, combined with the potential to generate new value into the media & internet market. The programme also aims to support the emergence of innovative models and disruptive solutions to communicate and transmit content and bring them closer to market. To achieve this, the project will implement a series of three open calls which are directed **at academic teams, researchers, SMEs, and startups** to define and implement small scale research projects on **one of the two focus areas**:

2.4.1 TOPIC: TRUST AND REPUTATION MODELS ON BLOCKCHAINS

When users access information and news sites in the future: Which are the sites which can be trusted based on several categories including quality, intention, bias, and factual correctness. The use case challenge here is to find mechanisms, supported by blockchain or similar concepts, which are simple and effective at the same time - thus leading to wide acceptance. Ideally, the introduction of such tools and solutions can be measured towards a gradual decline of misinformation, at least on major social and news channels.

Through the trustworthiness and tamper-proof aspect of information stored on blockchains, different multimedia and news items producers (e.g., News Agencies) can be evaluated regarding the information they produce. The evaluation process takes into consideration aspects such as quality, intention, bias, and factual correctness. The outcome of this process is to mark these producers as trustworthy or not.

Subsequently, a user can check the trustworthiness on a specific item. Furthermore, services that intend to consume multimedia items from various producers can restrict their selection range to include only trusted sources. Hence the trustability of the content is assured.

Topic Trust and reputation models on blockchains targets innovative applications, technologies, technical approaches, and methodologies that will increase the levels of trust in blockchain based information exchange. Emphasis will be put on user generated content on the internet and social media. Moreover, data from IoT infrastructures will be considered as well to ensure transparency and accountability on infrastructures created by end-users.

Call topics can include:

- Engineering new levels of trust from the device to the application and user-level, including mechanisms for measuring the trustworthiness of the media items and sources;
- Reputation measuring and assessment based on history of transactions as these are being recorded;
- Easy to use and understand reputation models applied on blockchain applications, and DApps;

- New ways of monetizing premium user generated content on media platforms through cryptocurrencies, and new solutions on getting access to trustworthy content (including paywalls);
- KYC/AML approaches on blockchains and DApps related to copyrights on user generated content.

2.4.2 TOPIC: PROOF-OF-VALIDITY AND PROOF-OF-LOCATION

This topic will focus on innovative mechanisms that will increase transparency and trustworthiness of user generated genuine content. The transactions generated by the users for sharing content (text, images, video, etc.) in the various social media form a set of interrelated interactions between users and content. This forms consequently a dynamic network (in terms of time and space dimensions) of social interactions between actors in the blockchains and the media items that are being created and shared. **The content to be considered here is mainly genuine user-generated content captured from users' mobile devices.** The users, as being part of a blockchain, can apply additional verification mechanisms that can increase transparency, validity and high level of trustworthiness: namely new Proof-of-Location and Proof-of-Validity mechanisms. While the first one has to do with intrinsic parameters that the mobile devices can provide (e.g. current location of the device when posting a specific article on social media) the Proof of validity is a human-contributed mechanism of validation whereby humans will undergo specific challenges and tests that are focused mainly on human intelligence and capabilities (e.g. recognise if a news item sounds too unrealistic and can be reported as disinformation). The applications under this topic are expected to be disseminated through the European Digital Media Observatory.

Proof-of-location

The focus here is on innovative ways to ensure that content is valid across several dimensions:

- Validity in time (data or facts presented are not old and overcome).
- Validity of content (facts are correct or if disputable marked as such).
- Validity in location for any multimedia content (videos/photos).
- Links and sources can be reached for checking.

There might be more facets for validity, potentially a bundle of elements and layers, resulting in generally valid products or information bits.

Proof-of-location is a category in its own right. From the perspective of a media company, proof-of-location applies to people working for the organisation as well as to people claiming to be from a location or at a location.

A second line relevant is that visuals such as photos or videos claiming to show a specific location have additional information, proof or metadata that the claim and the location are correct. Proof-of-location should therefore provide a mechanism to ensure that these claims are correct and valid. Proof-of-location can also apply to products, e.g., to enable trust in the claimed place of origin/production for an item.

Proof-of-validity

During the evaluation of the trustworthiness of a multimedia item, several checks are included to mark the item as trusted. These checks regard:

- Proof of time: the event described takes place in the timeframe it is described.
- Proof of content: the event described corresponds to the content.
- Proof of location: the event described takes place in a geolocation district.
- Proof of confirmation: the event described can be double checked based on reference links or additional sources.

These four parallel processes contribute to the trustworthiness of information since there is a multilayer validity check mechanism.

In a real-life example, when a user is presented with a breaking news event (which is an event taking place in a very specific place/time e.g.), the item has to satisfy all of the above criteria. The user can be informed thus that the content of the item corresponds to the event described as opposed to possible archive material of a different relevant event.

In **Topic Proof-of-validity and proof-of-location**, the focus is on innovative mechanisms to increase transparency and trustworthiness of user generated genuine content. The content to be considered here is mainly genuine user-generated content captured from users' mobile devices. The users, as being part of a blockchain, can apply additional verification mechanisms to increase transparency, validity, and high level of trustworthiness, such as Proof- of-Location and Proof-of Validity. The applications under this topic are expected to be disseminated through the European Digital Media Observatory.

Call topics can include:

- Privacy enhancing and preservation mechanisms for content creators while increasing the transparency and verification of the media item that has been generated.
- New algorithms for transparent and collaborative content verification through the use of blockchains
- Content Validation with the use of blockchains, crowdsourcing and Artificial Intelligence based techniques
- Location validation on user generated content
- Innovative uses of blockchain mechanisms and DApps to increase the transparency on media items shared on social media.
- New consensus mechanisms for blockchains that combine existing ones (e.g., Proof of Work, Proof of Stake, etc.) with crowdsourced ones (Proof of Location etc.)

- DApps for revealing and fighting misinformation and disinformation and contributing to content verification.

2.5 TRUBLO OPEN CALL 3

The **3rd open call aims at initially selecting up to 20 projects** led and executed by a critical number of developers, innovators, researchers, SMEs and entrepreneurs among others, actively involved in research, development and application activities in the fields of Blockchain related technologies. Technologies such as AI, IoT, Cloud and others related to the enhancement of the Blockchain solutions are also welcomed, but without further technical support described in 9.1.1.

Part of the action, experts in diverse fields will also provide to beneficiaries technology development guidance, working methodology as well as access to top infrastructure, training in business and data related topics, coaching, mentoring, visibility and community building support.

The call is open for submission from 27th January 2022 (12:00 PM CET) to 30th March 2022 (17:00 PM CET) and its indicative budget is € 1.900.000.

Selected applicants will enter a 9-months INNOVATION Stage (Phase 1). From the initial beneficiaries of Phase 1 (up to 15 projects), a subset of 3 beneficiaries will be retained for Progress Stage (Phase 2) according to excellence criteria and will further elaborate the concept proposed in Phase 1.

PHASES	ACTIONS	DURATION	BUDGET PER PROJECT
Phase 1-Innovation 26th May 2022 – 28th February 2023	To develop the proposed TruBlo project and prepare a publication (whitepaper or scientific article) describing their solution	9 months	€ 75.000 (*)
Phase 2- Progress 1st March 2023 – 31st August 2023	To develop activities associated with the demonstration/ piloting as well as promotion and exploitation of their project, building an MVP as demonstrator and aiming to engage new customers and/or partners and/or investors.	6 months	€ 100.000 (*)

Table 2: Phases length and budget

(*): Budget for Legal Entities. Budget for natural persons or groups of natural persons see section 5.1.

2.5.1 PHASE 1 INNOVATION: 26/05/2022 – 28/02/2023

Duration: 9 months, third parties work at their own facilities and occasionally participate in meetings, workshops and training organized by the consortium.

Activities and deliverables: selected teams will be developing the proposed TruBlo projects in collaboration/ connection with their networks, sector specialists and technology experts, by making use of the TruBlo blockchain infrastructure and supporting services. What they have to deliver at the end as minimum deliverables is a Whitepaper describing their solution and the impact it can have in the NGI and Media industry and a scientific publication in a prestigious open access journal with high impact.

Funding: €75,000 per third party project, being the payment associated with particular milestones defined between TruBlo and the third-party.

Evaluation to Stage Progress: analysis of development outcomes, achieved results, stage of development, collaboration with TruBlo activities and team; business potential of the solution.

PHASE 1 INNOVATION	
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R&D activities from concept to validation • Participation in TruBlo kick-off bootcamp, webinars, etc. • Presentation/sharing results to community • Open software/ hardware • At least one scientific publication in prestigious and open access journal
Expected results and Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Validation of a research concept in a specific environment (preferably in Alastria infrastructure and/or EDMO infrastructure but not obligatory for the participating teams) • White paper / Technical report with the description of the research result and analysis on the impact it can have in the industry • Publication of additional papers in other conferences, magazines and (scientific) journals (optional result) • Joint publication with other teams (optional result) <p>These expected results must be concreted in the below deliverables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D1.1 Full Research and Innovation Project Proposal • D1.2 Project Solution Design and Business Applicability • D1.3 White paper or Technical report or PoC • D1.4 Scientific or business publication
Duration	9 months
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total funding per project of €75,000 • Distributed over sprints of 3 months each (Confirmation 30%, sprint 1: 20%; Sprint 2: 30%; Sprint 3: 20%) and according to the achievement of specific defined milestones/ objectives and participation in TruBlo events/ bootcamps

2.5.2 PHASE 2 PROGRESS: 01/03/2023 – 31/08/2023

- **Duration:** 6-months, third parties work remotely (at their space) or with potential pilot customer; and participate in several meetings and events where they can promote their project's goals and outcomes;
- **Activities and deliverables:** third parties will develop activities associated with the demonstration/ piloting as well as promotion and exploitation of their project, building an MVP as demonstrator and aiming to engage new customers and/or partners and/or investors. The third-parties will also deliver a Whitepaper describing the evaluation and potential impact of their MVP and present their results in a demo day..
- **Funding:** €100,000 per third-party, attached to the achievement of particular milestones along the 6-months and the participation of relevant TruBlo events and planned promotion/ commercial activities of this stage.
- **Evaluation of Phase Progress:** analysis of pilot results, possible customers product acceptance/ validation, business traction, participation in TruBlo activities as well as international events, potential scientific, social and economic impact.

PHASE 2 PROGRESS	
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build synergies and have cross-collaboration activities with other projects and/or stakeholders • Create a Proof of Concept and Minimum Viable Product (MVP) • Validation of MVP in a specific environment (preferably in Alastria infrastructure and/or EDMO infrastructure but not obligatory for the participating teams) • Work together with potential users / customers (early adopters) • Participate in knowledge transfer events organised by TruBlo Consortium
Expected results and Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MVP in form of a prototype / demonstrator • Demonstration of developed solution with users / customers • Collection of insights and assessment report • Business Model Canvas • White paper detailing the technical aspects of the MVP along with an analysis of future potential and impact • Scientific publications and jointly authored publications with other teams (optional result). <p>These expected results must be concreted in the below deliverables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D2.1 Detailed Development Plan • D2.2 Detailed Development Plan Monitoring • D2.3 Validation Plan • D2.4 Final report of MVP • D2.5 Demonstration of developed solution with users • D2.6 White paper • D2.7 Business Plan
Duration	6 months
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total funding of €100,000.

- Distributed over two sprints of three months each and according to the achievement of specific defined milestones/ objectives and participation in TruBlo events/ bootcamps (Validation & Pitch: 30%, Delivery plan in sprint 1: 20%; Mentor Meeting in Sprint 2: 50%)

3. MODALITIES FOR APPLICATION

3.1 WHAT TYPE OF PROJECTS WILL BE ELIGIBLE?

Projects must be based on the TruBlo proposal template (Annex 3) and must clearly fit within one of the two focus areas aforementioned in section 2.1. **Both focus areas require advancing the state of the art, hence the participation of innovators and research groups is essential.**

Moreover, the participants should demonstrate their long-term commitment to the TruBlo research and innovation agenda. The teams will work to demonstrate that the proposed solution progresses from the beginning of the project, reaching a higher maturity level and take-up by the end of the action. Thus, projects in both focus areas must evidence substantial progress with a particular focus on the interoperability and sustainability of the outcomes. Thus, following the spirit of the H2020 Call ICT-54 Blockchain for the Next Generation Internet, the TruBlo Research and Innovation Action encourages open-source software and open hardware design, open access to data, standardisation activities, access to testing and operational infrastructure as well as an IPR regime ensuring lasting impact and reusability of results. If not, it should be duly justified.

At the eligibility evaluation stage, if a proposal is considered to better fit another focus area selected by the applicant, this latest will be contacted by the TruBlo Consortium in order to commonly agree to move the proposal to the relevant topic for evaluation.

3.2 WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS?

Immediately after the closing of the Open call (30th March 2022, 17:00h CET), the evaluation process begins (as described in detail in Section 4 of this Guide).

The project partner responsible for the process will check the eligibility of the applications and the applications considered eligible will be assigned randomly to external experts. They will evaluate the proposals and score them adequately according to the quality of the content presented and according to the criteria defined by the TruBlo project.

The goal of the process is to select up to 20 proposals, with the highest scores, under both call topics. to join the TruBlo research and innovation action. The exact number of selected projects will be subject to the quality of the proposals.

4. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

All applicants will have to abide by all general requirements described in this section to be considered eligible for TruBlo. Eligibility check verifies that:

- Submissions are made **ONLY through the F6S platform** in the space enabled for the TruBlo Open Call #2 within the defined deadline: <https://www.f6s.com/trublo-open-call-3/apply>
- Applicants/team members **residents in an eligible H2020 Country**, as indicated in 4.2
- Application as well as requested documents to be provided **only in English** language
- The proposal description is **submitted according to the guidelines and template provided**
- **Readable, accessible, and printable**
- Complete application which includes the **requested administrative data, and any obligatory supporting documents** specified in the call (provided in the application link)
- Include the **research proposal description**
- **ONTOCHAIN applicants with funding cannot participate** in the TruBlo project. Partners or affiliates of ONTOCHAIN consortium cannot participate as applicants either.

A proposal is only considered eligible if its content corresponds specifically to the topics of the TruBlo Call 3, including the specific eligibility conditions set out in the relevant parts of the Guide of Applicants. The eligibility filter enables the creation of a shortlist of proposals to be evaluated.

4.1 TYPES OF APPLICANTS

The target Applicants for this call are Internet technologists; researchers and innovators; researchers and developers employed in research centres or enterprises among others SMEs, in third-level education institutes, research infrastructures, non-profit organisations and charitable (scientific) foundations.

The applicants' can apply as individuals or linked to a legal entity. Hence, the participation is possible in several ways, as a:

- **Natural person(s):**

1.1 One or more individuals (team); established in any eligible country (see section 3.2). This does not consider the country of origin, but the residence permit.

- **Legal entity:**

2.1 One or more entities (consortium); established in an eligible country (see section 3.2);

2.2 Universities, research centres, NGOs, foundations, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (see definition of SME according to the Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC), large enterprises are eligible.

- Any combination of the above.

In addition, the following condition apply:

- The participating organisations should not have been declared bankrupt or have initiated bankruptcy procedures.
- The organisations or individuals applying should not have convictions for fraudulent behaviour, other financial irregularities, and unethical or illegal business practices.

4.2 ELIGIBLE COUNTRIES

Only Applicants/team members legally established/residents in any of the following countries (hereafter collectively identified as the “Eligible Countries”) are eligible:

- The Member States (MS) of the European Union (EU), including their outermost regions;
- The Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) linked to the Member States³;
- H2020 associated countries (those which signed an agreement with the Union as identified in Article 7 of the Horizon 2020 Regulation): according to the updated list published by the EC⁴;
- The UK applicants are eligible under the conditions set by the EC for H2020 participation at the time of the deadline of the call.

Please note that only individuals who are residents in an eligible H2020 country will be considered eligible (including those participating on behalf of SMEs and other legal entities). If one or more team members fail to meet this criteria, the proposal will be considered ineligible.

4.3 LANGUAGE

English is the official language for TruBlo open calls. Submissions done in any other language will be disregarded and not evaluated.

English is also the only official language during the whole execution of the TruBlo programme. This means that it’s mandatory that the submission of deliverables is done in English in order to be eligible.

4.4 PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Proposals must be submitted electronically, using the TruBlo Online Submission Service accessible via the F6S platform available at: <https://www.f6s.com/trublo-open-call-3/apply>. *Proposals submitted by any other means will not be evaluated.*

Only the description included in the application will be considered by evaluators. Only two documents, to be completed directly in the platform, are admissible:

- a form with administrative questions
- the proposal description

Both should be attached in **PDF format**. The content of the proposal description, such as its subtopics and tables, cannot be altered from the original template.

The information provided should be actual, true and complete and should allow the assessment of the proposal.

The preparation and submission of the proposal and other actions that follow this procedure (such as withdrawal) fall under the final responsibility of the applicant.

4.4.1 MULTIPLE SUBMISSIONS

This call is competitive, and applicants should focus on one specific topic, therefore only

³ Entities from Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) are eligible for funding under the same conditions as entities from the Member States to which the OCT in question is linked

⁴https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/hi/3cpart/h2020-hi-list-ac_en.pdf



one proposal per applicant may be submitted to this call, whether this is a legal entity or a natural person.

In the event of multiple submissions, only the last one received (timestamp of the system) will enter into the evaluation process. Any other submitted proposals involving the same applicant will be declared non-eligible and will not be evaluated in any case.

In the case of Applicants applying as natural person (or group of individuals):

- A natural person will be selected for funding only once, as in the case of one legal entity;
- If a natural person is taking part in several teams:
 - I. The members of the other teams will be informed about the participation of a natural person in multiple teams;
 - II. The natural person participating in multiple teams will be disqualified.

Note that the regular functioning of the F6S platform limits to one application submission per F6S user in each call.

If an F6S user wishes to submit more than one application, for example on behalf of different legal entities, the F6S user should request support from the F6S support team (support@f6s.com) cc'ing info@trublo.eu **at least 10 days prior the open call deadline.**

4.4.2 COMPLIANT DUE TO A TECHNICAL ERROR OF THE TRUBLO ONLINE SUBMISSION SERVICE

If you experience any problem with the application submission system prior the deadline of the open call you should reach F6S by email through support@f6s.com cc'ing the TruBlo Team (info@trublo.eu), and explain your situation.

If you believe that the submission of your proposal was not entirely successful due to a technical error on the side of the TruBlo Online Submission Service, you may lodge a complaint by email through support@f6s.com cc'ing the TruBlo Team (info@trublo.com) and explain your situation. For the complaint to be admissible **it must be filed within 4 calendar days following the day of the call closure.** You will receive an acknowledgement of receipt, the same or next working day.

You should secure a PDF version of all the documents of your proposal holding a **timestamp** (file attributes listing the date and time of creation and last modification) that is prior to the call deadline, as well as any proof of the alleged failure (e.g., screen shots). Later in the procedure you may be requested by the TruBlo Team to provide these items.

For your complaint to be upheld, the IT audit trail (application log files and access log files of TruBlo Online Submission Service) must show that there was indeed a technical problem at the TruBlo consortium side which prevented you from submitting your proposal using the electronic submission system.

Applicants will be notified about the outcome of their complaint within the time indicated in the acknowledgment of receipt. If a complaint is upheld, the secured files (provided to the IT helpdesk) for which the investigation has demonstrated that technical problems at the TruBlo consortium side prevented submission will be used as a reference for accepting the proposal

for evaluation.

We urge every applicant to submit their application in advance. **Any technical issues for application submission sent within the 12 hours before the deadline will risk not having the timely reply** needed to comply with the defined deadline for submission.

4.5 CONFIDENTIALITY AND DEADLINE

Any information regarding the proposal will be treated in a strictly confidential manner.

Only proposals submitted before the deadline will be accepted. **After the call closure no additions or changes to received proposals will be taken into account.**

Proposals must be submitted **before 30th March 2022, 17:00 CET. The deadline hour of submission is not flexible**, as the online form will be automatically disabled at day and hour defined as deadline - Open call 3 deadline: 30th March 17h CET.

To avoid missing the deadline, **you are encouraged to submit your proposal as soon as possible.**

4.6 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Applicants shall not have any actual or/and potential conflict of interest with the TruBlo selection process and during the whole programme. They must formally notify the TruBlo coordinator without delay any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interests and immediately take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation.

All cases of conflict of interest will be assessed case by case. In particular, applicants must take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective implementation of the project is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest ('conflict of interests').

Special mention of conflict of interest with the ONTOCHAIN project, also funded by the EU. ONTOCHAIN applicants with funding cannot participate in the TruBlo project. Partners or affiliates of ONTOCHAIN consortium cannot participate as applicants either.

If a conflict of interest is discovered and confirmed at the time of the evaluation process, the proposal will be considered as non-eligible and will not be evaluated.

4.7 OTHER

Each applicant must confirm:

- It is not under liquidation or is not an enterprise under difficulty according to the Commission Regulation No 651/2014, art. 2.18,
- Its project is based on the original works and going forward any foreseen developments are free from third party rights, or they are clearly stated.
- The project is based on work that has not been developed and offered as a commercial product or solution.
- It is not 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.

5. OPEN CALL EVALUATION PROCESS

5.1 PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND ACCESS TO TRUBLO FUNDING

Proposals are submitted in a single stage and evaluated in one step as presented hereafter.

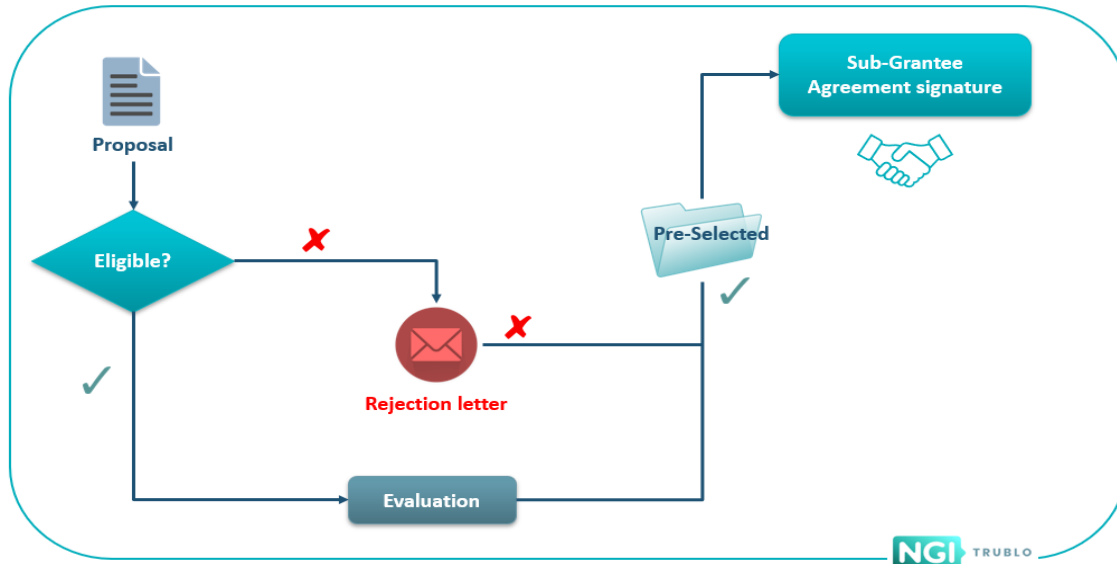


Image 2: Evaluation process

5.1.1 CHECK OF PROPOSAL ELIGIBILITY

Admissibility and eligibility criteria for each proposal are checked by the TruBlo Consortium team. A proposal may be declared ineligible or inadmissible at any stage. Eligibility check verifies that:

- Submissions are made **ONLY through the F6S platform** in the space enabled for the TruBlo Open Call #3 within the defined deadline: <https://www.f6s.com/trublo-open-call-3/apply>
- Applicants/team members **residents in an eligible H2020 Country** as indicated in section 4.2
- Application, as well as requested documents, must be provided **only in English** language
- The proposal description is **submitted according to the guidelines and template provided**
- **Readable, accessible, and printable**
- Complete application which includes the **requested administrative data, and any obligatory supporting documents** specified in the call (provided in the application link)
- Include the research proposal description
- **ONTOCHAIN applicants with funding cannot participate** in the TruBlo project. Partners or affiliates of ONTOCHAIN consortium cannot participate as applicants either.

A **proposal is only considered eligible if its content corresponds specifically to the topics of the TruBlo Call 3**, including the specific eligibility conditions set out in the relevant parts of the Guide of Applicants. The eligibility filter enables the creation of a shortlist of proposals to be evaluated.

5.1.2 PROPOSAL EVALUATION

The evaluation of proposals is carried out by the TruBlo Consortium with the assistance of independent experts. TruBlo Consortium team ensures that the process is fair and in line with the principles contained in the European Commission's rules on Proposal submission and evaluation.

First stage evaluation

Each proposal is evaluated by a set of 2 experts according to the criteria that are defined by the project TruBlo partners. These are adjusted to the identified relevant points along the project, taking in consideration lessons learned and improvement. For the OC3 the following four criteria and its sub criteria of analysis, were defined:

1-CONCEPT [0-5; min.3]

1.1 Focus, quality, and credibility of the research

Is the solution intended to be developed clearly, feasible and answer in a direct way to the proposed challenge?

1.2 Excellence/Innovation level

How innovative is the project proposal? Does the team demonstrate the innovation potential compared to the existing technology and/or solutions available on the market?

2- TECHNOLOGY [0-5; min.3]

2.1 Alignment, feasibility and focus of the proposals

Is the technology fit clearly identified? Is the solution feasible from technical perspective? Does the solution fit from TruBlo technical perspective?

2.2 SMART exploration and analyses of the proposal and its alignment with the project timeline

Is the technology implementation plan feasible for the requested deliverables are achieved, within the acceleration programme timeline?

3- IMPACT [0-5; min.3]

3.1 Coherence and effectiveness of the work plan

Is the proposal's potential scientific, social and economic impact in line with TruBlo objectives?

3.2 Sustainability and dissemination

Do the applicants plan to disseminate and exploit the new knowledge generated by the action, especially after the programme ends?

4- TEAM [0-5; min.3]

4.1 Appropriateness of the Human Resources allocated to the project

Do the team members have the required skills and experience to assure a high-quality product/service?

5- INNOVATION MANAGEMENT [0-5; min.3]

5.1 Adoption of Innovation Management process

Do applicants have formalised and adopted innovation management processes?

For each criterion there is a designated section for open comments where the evaluators/experts will indicate the **strengths and the weaknesses** identified in each of the points being assessed, these will be made based solely on the submitted project proposal.

The experts will score each criterion by equal weight, on a scale from 0 to 5 that will indicate the following assessments:

- **0 – Fail:** The proposal fails to address the criterion under examination or cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information.
- **1 - Poor:** Criteria is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
- **2 - Fair:** Proposal broadly addressed the criterion but there are significant weaknesses.
- **3 - Good:** The proposal addresses the criterion well, although certain improvements are possible.
- **4 - Very Good:** The proposal addresses the criterion well, but several shortcomings are present.
- **5 - Excellent:** The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question. Any shortcomings are minor.

For each criterion, the minimum threshold is 3 out of 5 points. The default overall threshold, applying to the sum of the individual scores is the average points attributed.

Experts perform evaluations on an individual basis, not as representatives of their employer, their country or any other entity. They are required to be independent, impartial, and objective, and to behave throughout in a professional manner. They sign an expert contract, including a declaration of confidentiality and absence of conflict of interest, before beginning their work.

All experts must declare beforehand any known conflicts of interest and must immediately inform the TruBlo Consortium team members if they detect a conflict of interest during the course of the evaluation. The expert contract also requires experts to maintain strict confidentiality with respect to the whole evaluation process. They must follow any instruction given by the TruBlo Consortium to ensure this. Under no circumstance may an expert attempt to contact an applicant on his/her own account, during the evaluation process. Confidentiality rules must be adhered to at all times before, during and after the evaluation.

Second stage of evaluation

The top ranked projects from the Remote Evaluation by external experts will be invited to participate in a Remote Interview, where teams are expected to pitch/ explain their project and answer to the jury questions. The jury is composed by the technical and business partners of the TruBlo project, being an internal process of selection. This process starts from this point with everyone in the same equal conditions.

The interview will be followed by a consensus meeting to align on evaluation results and select the final admitted to the project, within the limits of the available funding. Up to 20 projects

addressing both topics contemplated in the Open Call 3 (OC3) will be selected. The list of selected projects is going to be submitted to the European Commission for final screening.

Communication of the OC3 outcomes

The communication of the results will be made after about 2 weeks of the interviews evaluation stage, via e-mail and about 2 months after the OC3 closing date.

Each applicant will receive a letter informing of the decision whether a rejection decision or an invitation to integrate the project, as well as the following steps. All applicants will receive a report of their evaluation results, as an added value tool to contribute in a constructive way to the project development, either selected or not.

The non-eligible will also receive an email with the justification of its ineligibility, taking into account the rules set in the Guide of Applicants.

5.1.3 SCIENTIFIC MISCONDUCT AND RESEARCH INTEGRITY

Issues of scientific misconduct and research integrity are taken very seriously. In line with the Horizon 2020 Rules for Participation, appropriate action such as termination of the Grant Agreement Preparation phase or, if the Grant Agreement has been signed, the implementation of liquidated damages and financial penalties, suspension of payments, recoveries, and termination of the Grant Agreement, will be taken against any applicants/beneficiaries found to have misrepresented, fabricated or plagiarised any part of their proposal.

5.2 THE NEGOTIATION PROCESS

The objective of the negotiations is to fulfil the legal requirements between the TruBlo consortium and each selected project of the call. It covers essentially the status information of the beneficiaries. The legal requirements for legal entities and natural persons are provided in the table hereafter.

TYPE OF APPLICANT	REQUIRED INFORMATION
NATURAL PERSONS	<p>A copy of the ID-card or passport of participant(s) in the project team will be required.</p> <p>A proof for each participant in the project that (s)he is legally established and working in an eligible country (see section 3.2).</p>
LEGAL ENTITIES	<p>A legal existence: Company Register, Official Journal and so forth, showing the name of the organization, the legal address and registration number and, if applicable, a copy of a document proving VAT registration (in case the VAT number does not show on the registration extract or its equivalent)</p> <p>Specifically for SMEs: 1. A proof of the SME condition is required: - If the applicant has been fully validated as an SME on the Beneficiary</p>

	<p>Register of the H2020 Participant Portal, the PIC number must be provided.</p> <p>- If the applicant has not been fully validated as an SME on the H2020 Participant Portal, the following documents will be required to prove the status as an SME:</p> <p>2. In the event the beneficiary declares being non-autonomous, the balance sheet and profit and loss account (with annexes) for the last period for upstream and downstream organizations is required.</p> <p>3. Status Information Form. It includes the headcount (AWU), balance, profit & loss accounts of the latest closed financial year and the relation, upstream and downstream, of any linked or partner company.</p> <p>4. Supporting documents. In cases where either the number of employees or the ownership is not clearly identified: any other supporting documents which demonstrate headcount and ownership such as payroll details, annual reports, national regional, association records, etc.</p>
Legal Entities & Natural persons	<p>Bank account information: The account where the funds will be transferred will be indicated via a financial information form signed by the entity, individuals, and the bank owners. The holder of the account will be the legal entity and/or all the individuals or the coordinator of the group on its own (consortium of legal entities or consortium of legal entities and natural persons) if allowed by the other team members</p>
	<p>Sub-grantee funding agreement: Signed between the TruBlo Consortium (represented by its coordinator WorldLine Iberia SA), and the beneficiary/ies</p>

NOTE: The information requested by the TruBlo consortium must be provided within the indicated deadlines by the TruBlo consortium - failing to meet these deadlines may result in terminating the negotiation process.

5.3 MONITORING PROCESS OF PHASES

As part of the program timeline, there will be two phases, where the projects will be evaluated, taking into account their development. These two phases are named: Innovation and Progress.

Third parties taking part of the Innovation Phase will perform basic and applied research and have to produce beyond the *state-of-the-art* scientific results. The monitoring of the progress during the Innovation phase will be based on the completion and evaluation of deliverables (described below). A similar monitoring process will be applied for the Progress Phase. This will be mainly focused on the development of an MVP with the adequate business approach supported by the completion and evaluation of deliverables.

The applicants will be evaluated in each sprint to pass to the following phase, to monitor the progress and proper evolution of the teams. The table presented below describes the requirements defined per each phase of the process to be evaluated.

MONITORING PROCESS	
Phase 1 - INNOVATION	<p>Completion and evaluation of the deliverables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M1: D1.1 Full Research and Innovation Project Proposal • M3: D1.2 Project Solution Design and Business Applicability • M6: D1.3 Technical Report • M9: D1.4 White paper and Scientific or Business Publication or PoC
Phase 2 - PROGRESS	<p>Completion and evaluation of the deliverables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M10: D2.1 Detailed Development Plan • M12: D2.2 Detailed Development Plan Monitoring. D2.3 Validation Plan • M15: D2.4 Report of MVP. D2.5 Demonstration of developed solution with users. D2.6 White Paper. D2.7 Business Plan.

Table 2: Monitoring process

6. FINANCIAL SUPPORT PROVIDED

The distribution of the indicative budget of the call will be proportional to the number of eligible proposals received for both topics. The amount assigned to the two phases will be distributed in payments associated with results and milestones described in 6.1 and 6.2.

6.1 INDICATIVE DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS

Selected teams will become part of the TruBlo programme and will go through an exhaustive sequential process which will last for best applicants 9 months (Phase 1) and 6 months (Phase 2), each divided into three-month sprints. The maximum amount of the fund will vary depending on the type of team (See Section 4.1 Type of Beneficiaries) as indicated in the table below and providing that all the 2 phases have been completed. The total amount assigned to the Innovation Phase will be distributed in payments associated with results and milestones described in 7.1 and 6.2.

TYPE OF TEAM	Phase 1	Phase 2	Maximum funding
Natural person	37 500€	50 000€	87 500€
Team of natural persons	56 250€	75 000€	131 250€
Legal entity or consortium of legal entities or combination of legal entities and natural persons	75 000€	100 000€	175 000€

Table 3: Maximum funding per type of participant

For each phase, a pre-financing payment will be made during the first month and the remaining payments will be based on concrete results that will be evaluated at the end of the corresponding sprint. For the first phase, payments will be made in four instalments and for the second phase payments will be made in three instalments.

Phase 1 – Innovation

- **Start of the implementation and pre-financing:**

During the first week of the Innovation phase, each team will define with its coach the KPI's to be achieved during the Innovation phase as well as in its intermediate milestones. These KPIs will measure the technological advance, the progress in the business as well as the involvement and commitment of the teams (attendance to the meetings, fulfilling the deadlines for reporting, etc). After this KPIs definition, and the attendance to the welcome event where coaches, partners and teams will know each other, the pre-financing of 30% of the total amount will be delivered.

- **1st Sprint:**

After the first sprint of the innovation phase, the coaches will assess the percentage of execution of the project based on the fulfilment of KPI's. A 100% completion of KPIs will release the total of the 2nd payment, which is 20% of the total amount of this phase. A lower completion of the tasks will launch the proportional payment. If the KPIs are met by less than 50% the payment will be retained until the end of the Innovation Phase. If Less than 25%, the teams will be automatically disqualified from the process.

- **2nd Sprint:**

When the second sprint has been completed, a new assessment process will be done by the coaches, to review the fulfilment degree of the KPI's. Following the same model stated for the previous review, the completion of the 100% will release the total 3rd payment, 30% of the total amount of the Innovation phase. Lower completion of the task will launch the proportional payment. If the KPIs are met by less than 50% the payment will be retained until the end of the phase. If less than 25% is met, the teams will be automatically disqualified.

- **3rd Sprint:**

For the last sprint of this phase, the same logic as before will be followed. Teams will be paid according to their degree of fulfilment of KPI's. The 20% of the total amount in the case of a 100% fully completion. Only if the percentage of completion is under 25% the team will be disqualified, and no further payment released. This stage will end with a Validation and Pitch session where the teams will defend their projects before the TruBlo consortium. Two of them will be selected to continue in the Progress phase.

Phase 2 – Progress

- **Pre-financing payment:**

After the Validation and Pitch session the teams selected for continuing in the Progress phase will meet with the coaches and define the KPIs to be achieved during the Progress phase, as well as the mid-term milestones. After that, a new pre-financing of 30% of the total amount will be released to face the Progress phase.

- **1st Sprint:**

After the first sprint of the progress phase, the coaches will assess the percentage of execution of the project based on the fulfilment of KPI's. A 100% completion of KPIs will release the total of the 2nd payment, which is 20% of the total amount of this phase. A lower

completion of the tasks will launch the proportional payment. If the KPIs are met by less than 50% the payment will be retained until the end of the Progress Phase. If Less than 25%, the teams will be automatically disqualified from the process.

- **2nd Sprint:**

For the last sprint of this phase, the same logic as before will be followed. Teams will be paid according to their degree of fulfilment of KPI's. The 50% of the total amount in the case of a 100% full completion. Only if the percentage of completion is under 25% the team will be disqualified, and no further payment released.

6.2 SUMMARY OF FUNDING PER TYPE OF BENEFICIARY

	Innovation Phase				Progress Phase		
	Pre financing 30% of the total funding	Sprint 1.1 20% of the total funding	Sprint 1.2 30% of the total funding	Sprint 1.3 20% of the total funding	Pre financing 30% of the total funding	Sprint 2.1 20% of the total funding	Sprint 2.2 50% of the total funding
Indicative Dates	End M1	End M3	End M6	End M9	End M10	End M12	End M15
A natural person	11250€	7500€	11250€	7500€	15000€	10000€	25000€
A group of natural persons	16875€	11250€	16875€	11250€	22500€	15000€	37500€
Legal Entity or combination of legal entities or combination of legal entity (ies) and individual(s)	22500€	15000€	22500€	15000€	30000€	20000€	50000€

Table 4 : Funding per phase

NOTE: These numbers are indicative, detailed payment schedule and payment conditions will be settled in the Sub-grant Agreement and communicated by the TruBlo coordinator.

In the case of projects with multiple beneficiaries, the payments will be done to the coordinator. The coordinator must distribute the payments between the beneficiaries, and it will be done according to the conditions set in the Consortium Agreement and to be signed by all the beneficiaries, previous to the signature of this Sub grantee Agreement.

6.2.1 ORIGIN OF THE FUNDS

Any selected proposer will sign a dedicated Sub-Grantee Funding Agreement with the TruBlo project coordinator (on behalf of TruBlo Consortium). The funds attached to the Sub-Grantee Funding Agreement come directly from the funds of the European Project TruBlo, and the TruBlo consortium is managing the funds according to the Grant Agreement Number 957228 signed with the European Commission.

As will be indicated in the Sub-Grantee Funding Agreement, this relation between the sub-grantees and the European Commission through TruBlo project carries a set of obligations to the sub-grantees with the European Commission. It is the task of the sub-grantees to accomplish them, and of the TruBlo consortium partners to inform about them.

7. PREPARATION & SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

It is mandatory to submit the applications through the F6S platform (<https://www.f6s.com/trublo-open-call-3/apply>) which is directly linked with the TruBlo Programme. **Previously to the submission, it is required that the applicants register a profile at FS6 to be able to submit a proposal.**

The documents to be submitted are:

- **Application form:** administrative questions to be completed directly in the F6S platform: <https://www.f6s.com/trublo-open-call-3/apply>
- General questions for statistic purpose
- Tick boxes for the third parties confirming they have read the conditions and agree with the conditions defined in this document/OC;
- ANNEX 3.1 will be uploaded in case that more than 3 applicants participate as individuals (natural persons) or/and more than 3 applicants participate as organisations (Legal entities) filled with the information about the applicant(s) that do not fit in the application form.
- **Proposal description:** document in PDF format containing the description of the project. It will include three different sections:
 - (1) **Project Summary: “What is the problem you are trying to solve?”**
 - (2) **Team**
 - (3) **Concept**
 - (4) **Technology**
 - (5) **Impact**
 - (6) **Implementation**

The template is available on:

https://www.trublo.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Annex3_TRUBLO-Proposal-Description-Template.docx

The project proposals must strictly follow the template provided by the TruBlo consortium via the F6S platform, which defines sections and the overall length (8 pages maximum).

8. APPLICANTS COMMUNICATION FLOW

8.1 GENERAL COMMUNICATION FLOW

Following the closing of the OC3 there will be a process of evaluation, as referred in point 5, above. The applicants will receive communications after the evaluation process ends informing them if they passed or not, by email. A communication will also be sent to applicants that were considered ineligible, not being considered for the evaluation process, including the reasons for the exclusion.

8.2 APPEAL PROCEDURE

If, at any stage of the evaluation process, the applicant considers that a mistake has been made or that the evaluators have acted unfairly or have failed to comply with the rules defined by the TruBlo open Call, and that her/his interests have been prejudiced as a result, the following appeal procedures are available.

A complaint should be drawn up in English and submitted by email to info@trublo.eu

Any complaint made should include:

- Contact details;
- Indication of the subject of the complaint;
- Argument/evidence that sustains the complaint.

Anonymous complaints or those not providing the mentioned information will not be considered. Complaints should also be made within five (5) calendar days after the announcement of the evaluation results to the applicants.

As a general rule, the TruBlo Team will investigate the complaints with a view to arriving at a decision and issue a formal notice within no more than **twenty calendar days**, from the date of reception of the complaint, provided that all the required information has been submitted by the complainant. Whenever this time limit is exceeded, the TruBlo Consortium will inform the complainant by email of the reasons for the unforeseen delay and the subsequent steps.

9. SUPPORT AND TECHNICAL INFRASTRUCTURES

The TruBlo project will provide a unique and very competitive mixture of supporting services to the funded third parties, using TruBlo technical infrastructure. The mixture contains **Technical Support Services** (including the provision of the Alastria blockchain infrastructure), **Business and Innovation Support Services** to further strengthen the innovation capacity of

the selected third-parties projects and **Technical Knowledge Support & Training Services**. This combination of support envisions to strengthen the skills of the project teams and facilitate knowledge transfer. These services are described in the following points.

9.1 TECHNICAL SUPPORT SERVICES

9.1.1 ALASTRIA NETWORK

For the TruBlo participants, Alastria will provide use two of the Blockchain networks to use: the Red-T network based on Quorum technology and the Red-B network based on Hyperledger Besu technology, both are Ethereum-type networks.

The TruBlo project will provide a Portal to request the different services that are going to be provided:

- The **Alastria Self Sovereign Identity** (AlastriaID) that will help you to understand how to incorporate your projects to use Verifiable Credentials.
- A **TruBlo GitHub repository** space(s) for your projects if you do not want to set your own spaces. This will also facilitate the open-source enhancements that TruBlo is emphasizing for the projects.
- A **Node-Requester-Mechanism*** if you want to host your own Blockchain node and just connect to the networks
- Or a **Node-As-A-Service*** if you want to Alastria to host your Blockchain node for you.
- A **TruBlo Wallet** to use the AlastriaID for your project. In the TruBlo Wallet you may incorporate the use of the services within this list.
- **Smart contracts Test Tool** to validate your Smart contracts based on Best Practices (coding) and Best Practices (security)
- **Smart contracts deployment Tool** to deploy your Smart Contracts in one of the network in a secure way) without no technical expertise
- **Storage-as-a-Service** for your project storage requirements (up to a certain limit of space based on TruBlo Credits)
- **Dashboard** mechanism for statistics of usage/activity of your project
- A mechanism for **connectivity to the European Observatory against Disinformation Verification Platform**

All these services, wallet and Portal will be available for users at the beginning of the Phase 1 (Innovation).

* **NOTE:** Node-Requester-Mechanism and Node-As-A-Service are services only available for Legal Entities.

9.1.2 EUROPEAN OBSERVATORY AGAINST DISINFORMATION PLATFORM

The European Observatory against Disinformation (<https://www.disinfobservatory.org>) is currently using its own verification and collaboration platform in order to serve its users' needs. All TruBlo beneficiaries will be provided with the option to develop applications and solutions

that can be integrated (with an API interface) to this platform and tested by a large community of users, in real life scenarios. The main operational features of the verification and collaboration platform used by the European Observatory against disinformation platform are presented as follows:

1. **Content aggregation:** Find and insert an unlimited volume of information by defining content flows from multiple social media platforms and web sources.
2. **Content curation:** Create collections and organize relevant content into collections.
3. **Robust search and filtering:** Aggregate content or search through and inside collections by using a variety of filters (keywords, date, user, location, etc.).
4. **Automated translation:** Translate content from/to any language.
5. **Content analysis:** Analyse the aggregate content with the aid of a variety of tools operated by TrulyMedia, as well as third-party providers.
6. **Editing:** Easily create content and publish it online or insert to editorial systems directly from TrulyMedia.
7. **Collaboration:** Connect with your team members or other organizations to collaboratively analyse and verify online content.

Beneficiaries will be provided with:

- Training and technical assistance to make sure that their solution can be easily integrated and tested, while meeting the user needs and technical requirements of the Observatory;
- Access to the platform services and provision of relevant cases for fact checking;
- API for accessing thematic aggregated content from SM and web sources;
- API for accessing existing fact-checked repositories;
- Service for submission of trustworthiness requests.

The API can provide verdicts about the trustworthiness of a news item from multiple sources (User generated content, social media, Newsrooms). Once the request is submitted the Disinformation Observatory evaluation mechanism provides the verdict after the conclusion of the relevant fact checking. Items can be marked as trusted or untrusted.

9.2 BUSINESS AND INNOVATION SUPPORT

The "Business and Innovation Support Services" is a broad term that covers various tasks that support innovation. In the context of TruBlo, these services aim to facilitate and enhance innovation of start-ups, research teams and SMEs, who will be selected to receive funding from the project to develop innovative prototypes and applications. BISS will be offered to the recipients, on demand, by members of the consortium.

The support is split into two key areas:

- **General business support:** Helping, guiding, and supporting to get to results. This includes innovation techniques, business modelling and guidance on user needs, feedback to development plans;

- **Communication support:** To ensure that the teams, their selection, and the work done is adequately public, can be found and used for other research and innovation efforts. Here the work is primarily to use the communication channels of the project. A special task is enabling the participants to talk to potential users, e.g. a participant working on a solution for media companies has a chance to interact with domain experts, who will provide potentially critical feedback regarding needs, features, workflows, etc.

Each supported entity, either in Phase 1 or Phase 2 of the open Call procedure, will receive an Innovation Voucher equal to 20 credits, which can be “redeemed” according to their needs in one or more of the services offered by the project. The Innovation Voucher Scheme is outlined in the following data in the table below

	PHASE 1: INNOVATION	PHASE 2: PROGRESS
Innovation Feedback & Fine-tuning	Provide a thorough review and feedback on the applicants' solutions, both from the technological and the business angle, to refine its concept for better addressing current market needs and trends.	
Innovation Brokering	Connecting different teams and entities, working on similar or complementary technological fields to collaborate and therefore add value to their outcomes and products. This activity may also allow Phase 1 applicants to co-develop Phase 2 applications with other organisations.	
Innovation Funding		Provide guidance, tips and feedback before and throughout the application process for identifying alternative European funding sources.
Business Modelling and Planning Support		Guidance, tools and advisory to the application on how to develop and choose the right business model and how to draft and present a solid, according to standards, business plan.
Awareness Raising	Support with communications services. The project will use the communication and dissemination tools of the project: TruBlo website; newsletter; social media channels (primarily Twitter and LinkedIn).	
“Talk to Users” Hotline	Establish an “open” line with the end users to receive feedback on their concepts, ideas, and validate their assumptions regarding the key users needs for the software. The project will work as a bridge as the partners will assist in finding the required experts, e.g.legal, newsroom, technical	

	infrastructure. The “Talk to Users” format will be set-up as regular business hours under the credits context, mentioned above.
Knowledge transfer	TruBlo will organise several webinars covering a number of thematic business growth and technical related topics (such as Sales, Operations, Business Planning, Valuation etc.), using the knowledge within the project partners. The webinars will be open for participation to all successful applicants of the calls so that they benefit from this shared knowledge and apply it to the development of their projects.

9.3 TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE SUPPORT AND TRAINING

The following set of activities will provide the programme technical/ research logic and vision for the selected projects as well as the corresponding support. TEKSUS will be offered to the recipients, on demand, by members of the consortium.

Technical Knowledge Support: TruBlo will provide to participants the necessary technical support by answering technical questions and providing scientific content and advice on demand, whenever possible;

Technical Training & Mentoring: TruBlo will enrich the technical skills of the participants and equip them with the necessary background and baseline knowledge to support innovation, by providing links to all the necessary training material and technical toolkits. These services can include:

- **Self-paced courses;**
- **E-Classes** in which participants will be able to interact live with each other by sharing questions, experiences and solutions;
- **Coaching and mentoring sessions:** there will be a follow up along the project, of about 4 hours, per each mentor, per month for the teams. The follow up can be made up to 2 mentors per project. The mentors work as bridges and facilitators of knowledge, as a pool of mentors, from the partners of the TruBlo project, is available on several platforms of interaction. The designated mentors per team is available for one on one interaction by email and for online meetings, on a biweekly average, or upon request. This mentoring and coaching support at the technological, scientific and business level;
- **Technical Coordination:** TruBlo will ensure the thematic and technical coherence and coordination of the projects initiated by the participants as well as cross-fertilization between the projects, so that the collection of the selected projects contributes towards a significant advancement and impact in the research domain.

The above services will be provided by several means. A **Learning Management System** will also be used as an online collaborative platform where participants will find all the necessary services for technical knowledge support and training. This platform will be focused on standard approaches followed in blended learning, distance education, flipped classroom and other e-learning projects in universities, workplaces and other sectors. The main features provided through this platform will be:

SERVICE	DESCRIPTION
Training Material Lessons	The content pages will provide lessons that will support the development and innovation of the new projects
Wiki / Library	<p>A collection of web pages that anyone can add to or edit, which will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of relevant projects: A section where the participants will be able to quickly find tenths of other projects relevant to the field of interest of this call. A separate subsection will be provided for the presentation of the projects being funded by TruBlo; • List of relevant publications: A section where participants will be able to find (or add) publications or sources relevant to the scientific and technical interests of the participating projects; • List of tools: A section where participants will be able to find (or add) links to useful tools and the corresponding user manuals. A TruBlo code repository GitHub may be created to support this feature under https://github.io/ TruBlo and easy-accessible by the TruBlo Portal as defined in the section 8.1.1; • Glossary: A section which will enable participants to create and maintain a list of definitions, like a dictionary.
Forum & Chat	Means for all participants to have asynchronous and real-time synchronous discussions with mentors, trainers, and other members of the community.
Question Bank	This subforum will be the main place where technical knowledge support will be offered, based on questions of the participants provided through the project tools (slack channel).
Surveys	For gathering data e.g. from participants to help organisers learn about their “class” and to collect feedback, in order to enhance the training material and procedures.

10. SUPORT TO APPLICANTS

For more information about the TruBlo open Calls, please check the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) section included at <https://www.TruBlo.eu/faq/>

For further information on the TruBlo Open call, namely regarding the eligibility rules, the information that is to be provided in the Application Form, or if you encountered technical issues with the Application Form, please contact TruBlo Helpdesk email: info@trublo.eu

11. TIMELINE

The table below presents **the indicative** dates during which each phase of TruBlo Open Call 3 will take place.

ACTION	INDICATIVE TIMELINE
Call Publication	27th January 2022 at 12:00 PM CET
Call Deadline	30th March 2022 at 17:00 PM CET
Evaluation Period	From 30th March to 06th May 2022
Signature of Sub-grant Agreement	Until 26th May 2022
Phase 1-Innovation	From 26th May 2022 to 28 th February 2023
Phase 2-Progress	From 1st March 2023 to 31st August 2023

Table 5: Timeline

The **dates may change due to unforeseen events and situations**, therefore these are just an indication of what is initially expected - the dates are to be confirmed by the TruBlo team along the process and are not restrictive.

12. ANNEXES

Annex 2.1- Proposal Description template

https://www.trublo.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Annex3_TRUBLO-Proposal-Description-Template.docx

Annex 2.2- TruBlo Additional applicants template

https://www.trublo.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Annex3.1_Additional-Aplicants-template-TRUBLO.docx

Annex 3.2- Refining Research Challenges and Direction

https://www.trublo.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Annex3.2_Refining-Research-Challenges-and-Direction.pdf

13. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

13.1 IPR OWNERSHIP OF THE SUB-GRANTED PROJECTS

The ownership of all IPR created by the beneficiaries, via the TruBlo funding, will remain with them. Results are owned by the Party that generates them. The Sub-Grant Agreement will introduce provisions concerning joint ownership of the results of the sub-granted projects. This will be assessed and negotiated case by case.

13.2 COMMUNICATION OBLIGATIONS

There are no IPR obligations toward the European Commission (EC). However, any communication or publication of the beneficiaries shall clearly indicate that the project has received funding from the European Union via the TruBlo project, therefore displaying the EU and project logo on all printed and digital material, including websites and press releases.

Moreover, beneficiaries must agree that certain information regarding the projects selected for funding can be used by TruBlo consortium for communication and dissemination purposes.



Disclaimer

The information, documentation and figures available in this deliverable are written by the "Trusted and reliable content on future blockchains— TruBlo" project's consortium under EC grant agreement 957228, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Commission. Neither the European Union institutions and bodies nor any person acting on their behalf may be held responsible for the use which may be made of the information contained therein.

The information in this document is provided "as is" and no guarantee or warranty is given that the information is fit for any particular purpose. The user thereof uses the information at its sole risk and liability. Moreover, it is clearly stated that the TruBlo consortium reserves the right to update, amend or modify any part, section, or detail of the document at any point in time without prior information.

The TruBlo project, co-funded from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 957228, foresees as an eligible activity the provision of financial support to third parties, to achieve its own objectives.

Copyright notice

© 2020 - 2023 TruBlo Consortium

This document may contain material that is copyright of certain TruBlo Consortium Partners and may not be reproduced or copied without permission. All TruBlo consortium partners have agreed to the full publication of this document. The commercial use of any information contained in this document may require a license from the proprietor of that information.

