FiERCE
MAKING SPACE FOR GREEN SOLUTIONS

Open Call

For the Advisory Services Support Program

Guide for applicants

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Introduction

FIERCE is a 3-year Coordination and Support Action funded under the Horizon Europe Framework Programme (2021–2027), running from November 2024 to October 2027. The project is dedicated to accelerating the adoption of downstream space data and services by SMEs to drive innovation for the green and digital transition.

This document provides useful information to the applicants of the 2nd Open Call for the Advisory Services Support Program, hereafter the Open Call. It is intended to support prospective participants in understanding the scope, procedures, and requirements of the Open Call prior to submitting an application. Please take time to carefully read this document to ensure a clear understanding of the call and the submission process.

The application period is from **12 January 2026, 13:00 CET up to 31 March 2026, 17:00 CET**. The Guide for Applicants is effective from 12 January 2026 and remains valid until the closing date of the Open Call on 31 March 2026**.**

The Advisory Services Support Programme

The Advisory Services Support Program is designed to help SMEs strengthen their capacity to design, develop, or enhance “green solutions”, by integrating downstream space data and services.

While all kinds of space-enabled “green solutions” are eligible, the program places a particular focus on supporting solutions in areas such as:

- Improvement of circularity, resource-efficiency and waste management
- Safe, resource-efficient, and environmentally friendly management of primary, secondary, and critical raw materials
- Improved environmental monitoring

By “green solutions” we mean products, services, or processes that reduce the environmental impact of the company (directly via the improvement of processes) or of its clients (indirectly through green products).

How our support works

Each selected SME will be assigned to a Lead Mentor and together they will design a personalized package of support, based on their needs. The support will be provided over a three-month period (maximum) in two formats:

1-1 Advisory: Tailored guidance specific to the SME’s business needs, supporting them in exploring and applying space data, improving circularity, and much more.

Masterclasses: Sessions offering hands-on experience, tools, and knowledge to support space-enabled green innovation.

Our Advisory Services

Technical and Business Space

The selected SMEs can explore the potential of **satellite and Earth Observation (EO) data** to drive innovation across diverse sectors such as **raw materials, agriculture, energy, logistics, etc.** Through interactive sessions and personalised support, SMEs will:

- understand key types of **satellite data** and their applications
- learn to use **open-access tools and processing software** for remote sensing and geospatial analysis
- explore integration of EO with **IoT and real-time monitoring systems**
- receive guidance on **custom space-enabled applications**, including SAR-based products.
- understand the **space economy landscape** and align their offerings with current trends
- **find suitable external service providers** to assist them in further developing their solutions (within the FIERCE Financial Support Program or beyond)

The service will be delivered as a multi-level advisory support, starting from a foundational understanding and evolving towards more advanced applications, depending on the needs and maturity of each beneficiary.

Circular Value Chains and Products

The selected SMEs aiming to transition from linear to circular business models will gain access to strategies, digital tools, and tailored mentoring to rethink how they design, produce, and deliver value. Support focuses on:

- analysing **value chains and material flows** using space-enabled insights and niche software
- identifying **circular intervention points** in operations or products
- co-developing **sustainable strategies** aligned with each SME's market, operational, and innovation goals.

Environmental Monitoring & CSRD

The selected SMEs will learn how to use EO data and satellite-based services to meet **environmental performance goals** and respond to **EU regulations** like CSRD. Support will help SMEs to:

- monitor **emissions, land use, and environmental risks** using EO-based indicators
- understand and implement **ESG reporting practices**
- apply tools such as the **Dreven ESG suite** to assess performance and communicate impact
- prepare for **sustainability reporting requirements**, including CSRD alignment.

Raw Materials

The selected SMEs will explore how **space data supports the entire mining life cycle,** from **exploration** and **safety monitoring** to **waste management** and the **valorisation of secondary raw materials**. Through masterclasses and tailored 1-1 advisory, SMEs will:

- understand how EO data enhance **mineral exploration** and **risk mitigation**
- identify integration points for their products or services within the **mining value chain**
- apply satellite data to improve **raw material disposal** management, access **curated datasets** and connect with relevant **solution providers** through targeted matchmaking.

Business Strategy and Funding Opportunities

To support growth, innovation, and market competitiveness, the selected SMEs will receive tailored guidance across key areas of business strategy and access to funding. Support is focused on helping the selected SMEs to:

- prepare for **investor engagement** and overcome common financing challenges
- identify and apply for relevant **EU and private funding**, including accelerators and investment opportunities
- understand **regulatory** and **compliance** challenges
- refine **value propositions**, **business models**, and **strategic positioning**
- strengthen **communication and marketing strategies**, from branding to outreach.

Intellectual Property Essentials & EU Support Instruments

To protect their innovations and build long-term resilience, the selected SMEs will receive expert guidance on **intellectual property (IP)** and available **EU-level support tools and training**. Services help SMEs to:

- understand available **IP protection measures** and how they align with business goals
- access curated **EU training programs** and online tools.

The Open Call

Profile of the Applicants

This Open Call targets companies that are interested in using downstream space data in order to create solutions that have a positive environmental impact, either

(i) for the company itself (e.g. by improving current processes to minimize waste, pollution, etc.) or

(ii) for its clients (e.g. by creating new or improving existing products for better resource management, environmental monitoring, etc.).

Applicants should demonstrate their potential to leverage downstream space data, such as EO, remote sensing, satellite navigation, or geospatial analytics. FIERCE welcomes applicants working in a wide range of digital and green technologies.

Eligibility criteria

The Open Call will accept applications from:

- Self Employed individuals
- Micro Enterprises
- Small Enterprises
- Medium-sized Enterprises

including start-ups[1] and scale-ups[2].

Applications must be submitted by a single legal entity; applications submitted by consortia will not be considered. The entities have to be established in any EU Member State and its Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) or **Horizon Europe Associated Countries**.

Applicants under EU restrictive measures are ineligible.

The FIERCE partners and their affiliated entities are not eligible to participate in the Open Call. This restriction also applies to their employees and associates, whether currently employed under standard or equivalent contracts or serving as board members. Former employees and associates are also excluded if they were involved in the project at any stage.

Admissibility criteria

- **Submission system:** Applications need to be submitted using the OnePass platform.
- **Deadline:** Applications must be submitted by **31 March 2026 at 17:00 CET.**
- **Language:** The application must be in English.
- **Complete application:** Only complete applications, in the mandatory parts, will be admitted. Any additional material not explicitly requested in the online application form will not be taken into account during the evaluation process.

How to apply

All interested entities should apply through the OnePass platform by submitting a complete application form. To enter the application form, one must first register in OnePass. They could either create a new account or simply register via Google.

[1] *Start-ups refers to a tech-oriented company. It should employ less than 10 people (but more than 2 full-time equivalent staff) that has operated for less than three years and has attracted more than €50k early-stage private sector investment or has demonstrable sales growth over 50% pa.*

[2] *Scale-ups, according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), refers to those SMEs that have been growing over three consecutive financial years at an annual rate above 20% in terms of turnover or number of employees.*

Within the application form, applicants are first asked to provide some key information about the company (name, type, country, etc.) and its core activities as well as the applicants' contact details.

Next, the applicant is asked to state whether their interest in space data derives from their need to (i) improve their own internal/ external processes **or** (ii) to create/ improve a space-enabled product or service. Based on this choice, the applicant is asked to describe their solution, highlighting its contribution to our thematic areas (as described in page 3), if relevant.

Once the main idea is briefly described, the applicant must select all the services (provided by the experts of the consortium) that they are interested in receiving. Multiple selection is allowed and strongly encouraged (via checkboxes).

However, please note that in case of being selected, the final combination of services that you will receive will be co-defined with the Lead Mentor that you will be assigned to.

At the end, the applicant goes through a set of self-declarations to state that information provided in the application form is true and accurate, there is no reason to be excluded from this EU-funded support, etc.

Finally, there is an optional feedback section for the overall application process.

To support potential applicants, the FIERCE project partners will provide a range of resources, including an Info Day, a "How to Apply" webinar, an up-to-date FAQ section, a LinkedIn group "The FIERCE Group - Making downstream space a mainstream place for innovators" to collectively discuss queries and ongoing Helpdesk services (opencall_helpdesk@project-fierce.eu). The Info Day and the "How to Apply" webinar will be recorded and be made available here.

Questions during the submission process

Applicants are advised to consult the Guide for Applicants and regularly visit the FAQs section before reaching out for support. For further assistance, inquiries can be submitted via the official Helpdesk email (opencall_helpdesk@project-fierce.eu). Responses are typically provided within 4 working days, although this may extend to up to 6 days during peak periods. All inquiries must be submitted at least 72 hours before the application deadline to ensure a timely response.

Modification of an application

Once an application is submitted via the platform, applicants will not be able to make modifications to that submission. It is possible to save the progress of the application and return afterwards. So, in case of questions, the progress can be saved, applicants can contact us at opencall_helpdesk@project-fierce.eu for all necessary clarifications and then submit their final application. If still, upon submission, applicants wish to make changes, they must submit a new application. Applicants may resubmit their application as many times as needed **until the deadline.** Only the latest version submitted before the relevant deadline will be evaluated. In that sense, each applicant can apply for only one solution. It is good practice to indicate the updated submission through the title of the application (e.g. _v2)

Please pay close attention to the evaluation deadlines:

For applications submitted between 12 January 2026 and 28 February 2026, resubmissions will be accepted until 28 February 2026, at 17:00 CET.

For applications submitted after 28 February 2026, resubmissions will be accepted until the final deadline on 31 March 2026, at 17:00 CET.

Evaluation and Selection Procedure

All applications will go through the following stages:

1. **Admissibility and Eligibility Check.** FIERCE will verify if the applicants meet all the eligibility and admissibility criteria. Please be aware that applications that do not comply with these requirements will be rejected.

2. **Evaluation.** Applications that pass the eligibility/ admissibility check will be evaluated by a dedicated Evaluation Committee—composed of representatives from the FIERCE project partners—based on the information provided in the application form and according to the applicant's potential to:

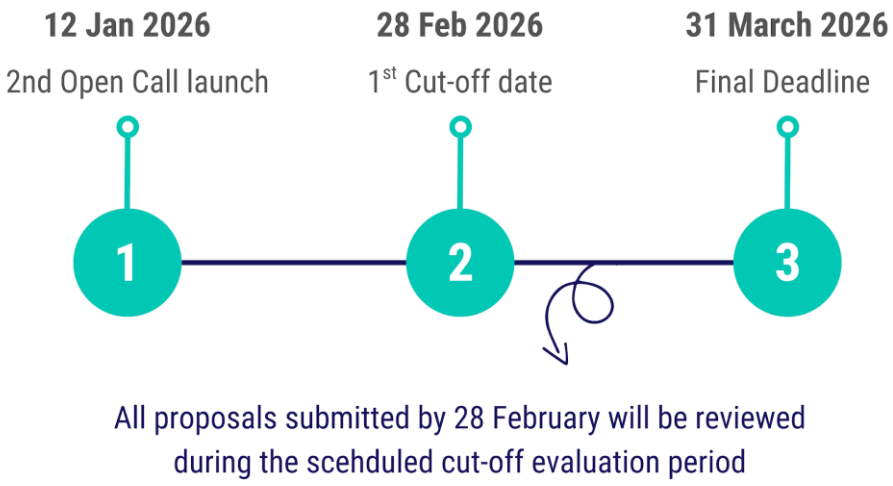
- **Scope:** apply downstream space technologies to improve current processes in areas such as: (i) Value chain and product circularity optimization (ii) Safe, resource-efficient, and environmentally friendly management of primary, secondary, and critical raw materials (iii) Improved accuracy, coverage, and transparency of environmental indicators (aligned with CSRD principles)
- **European dimension:** address sectorial challenges that can be replicable also at European level
- **Transformation potential:** show the relevance and ambition of transformation objectives, aiming to significantly advance the SME's transition to a more sustainable and circular business model.

Each of the three criteria will be scored on a scale from 1 to 5, with a maximum total score of 15 points.

3. **Consensus Phase.** The results from the evaluators will be consolidated in a consensus meeting to create a ranking list.

4. **Results Notification and Onboarding.** All applicants will receive official notification of the evaluation results regardless of the outcome. As this Open Call closes on 31 March 2026 and includes one cut-off date (28 February 2026) the evaluation and announcement of the results will be carried out in two phases.

In particular, all proposals submitted by **28 February 2026, 17:00 CET** will be reviewed during the scheduled 1st cut-off evaluation period and successful applicants will be considered as the first "batch" of winners. The applications submitted between 1–31 March 2026, will be evaluated after the final deadline (31 March 2026) and the successful applicants will be considered as the 2nd "batch of winners. All applicants will be invited to onboard the program in late April 2026 and start their journey in May 2026.



Implementation Timeline

Rights and obligations

If your project is selected, you will benefit from a complimentary set of technical and business services.

As a beneficiary, you are expected to:

- Dedicate the time needed to receive free mentoring and advisory services.
- Agree to participate in a post-service delivery survey to evaluate the services and activities implemented during the collaboration.

Confidentiality and data protection

All information received will be managed responsibly and in compliance with data protection requirements. Applicants remain solely responsible for clearly identifying and marking any information they consider confidential as such.

If an applicant is selected to receive support, they will be asked to provide additional details related to the service. Any information shared as confidential will be treated with strict confidentiality and will not be disclosed to any partner other than the expert assigned to deliver the service.

As this is an EU-funded project, the consortium is contractually obliged to submit deliverables to the European Commission (EC) to document efforts, activities, and outcomes. The deliverables related to the Advisory Services Support Program will indicate that your company received support and specify the type of services provided. However, no confidential information will be included in these reports.

Complaints

If, after receiving the results of the evaluation phase, you consider that a mistake has been made, resulting in the rejection of your application, you have the right to send us a complaint. You can email us in English to opencall_helpdesk@project-fierce.eu including the following information:

- your contact details (including email address)
- the subject of the complaint
- information and evidence regarding the alleged breach.

You have 3 (three) calendar days to submit your complaint starting from the day after the results are communicated. We will review your complaint within 7 (seven) calendar days from its reception. If additional time is required, you will be notified by email about the extension. Please note that anonymous complaints or those with incomplete information will not be reviewed.

Contact & Support

For any inquiries, please contact the FIERCE team at opencall_helpdesk@project-fierce.eu

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