



Open Tenders for Innovations

Guide for applicants

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Prepared by BRIGAIID Connect with contributions from GAC, UN SDSN, UT, LMU, ULL and AKPT.

This document provides information and step-by-step guidance to support innovators with their participation in the ARSINOE Open Tenders for Innovation.

In addition to these guidelines, applicants are invited to get acquainted with [The Climate Innovation Window](#) (CIW) where they will have the option to showcase their innovation once the evaluation process is completed. The CIW is an online match-making platform allowing municipalities, regional governments and other authorities to identify climate adaptation innovations corresponding to their needs and engage with their developers. The CIW is actively used by the ARSINOE consortium and the regional stakeholders in the project's nine case studies to identify potential solutions to specific climate-driven challenges.



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ARSINOE is an EU-funded project aimed at creating climate-resilient regions through systemic solutions and innovations. ARSINOE will shape the pathways to resilience by bringing together the Systems Innovation Approach (SIA) and the Climate Innovation Window (CIW) to build an ecosystem for climate change adaptation solutions. This approach is showcased in nine demonstrators, as a proof-of-concept with regards to its applicability, replicability, potential and efficacy. The project is funded through the European Union’s Horizon H2020 Innovation Action Programme under Grant Agreement No. 101037424.



1. Introduction

Taking stock of Europe’s most promising and innovative ideas to drive climate resilience

Within the ARSINOE project, nine regions (our *case studies*, some of which are split into sub-cases due to their transboundary profile) are developing their pathways to climate resilience. These pathways are co-designed with regional stakeholders following the Systems Innovation Approach. The approach is taking the participants of each case study through a process of collective reflection, followed by collaborative identification and formulation of the key climate-driven challenges that their respective region is facing. It then leads to an open search for potential solutions to tackle these challenges. Helping our case studies to take stock of the most promising climate adaptation innovations from across Europe is the main aim of ARSINOE’s Open Tenders for Innovation.



Figure 1 – The first outputs of the Systems Innovation Approach employed in ARSINOE and the Open Tenders for Innovations within it.

1.1. The ARSINOE Open Tenders for Innovation

What do we aim for?

In 2023, ARSINOE is launching a series of Open Tenders to engage with climate adaptation and resilience innovators from across Europe. The series of Open Tenders aims to contribute to regional adaptation by:

- **Identifying promising or mature innovations to be included in ARSINOE’s Portfolio of Innovations** (i.e. the project’s overall set of technological, governance, policy, economic, and societal solutions to our regions’ climate-driven challenges)
- **Helping case study managers to integrate relevant innovations into their regional Innovation Packages** (these are region-specific portfolios of R&I solutions, mature enough for demonstration, which may include nature-based solutions, innovative technologies, financing, insurance and governance models, awareness and behavioral change)
- **Facilitating the collaboration of ARSINOE’s case study partners (public administrations, academic institutions, and businesses) with innovators** via the awarding of contracts for co-development and demonstration

In the second Open Tender, ARSINOE is looking for innovations that address the negative social, environmental, and economic impacts of **extreme heat, water stress, water pollution, and/or floods**. Innovations may be social, governance, structural, software, and/or nature-based. The aim is to identify promising or mature innovations that can help our case study regions become more climate resilient.

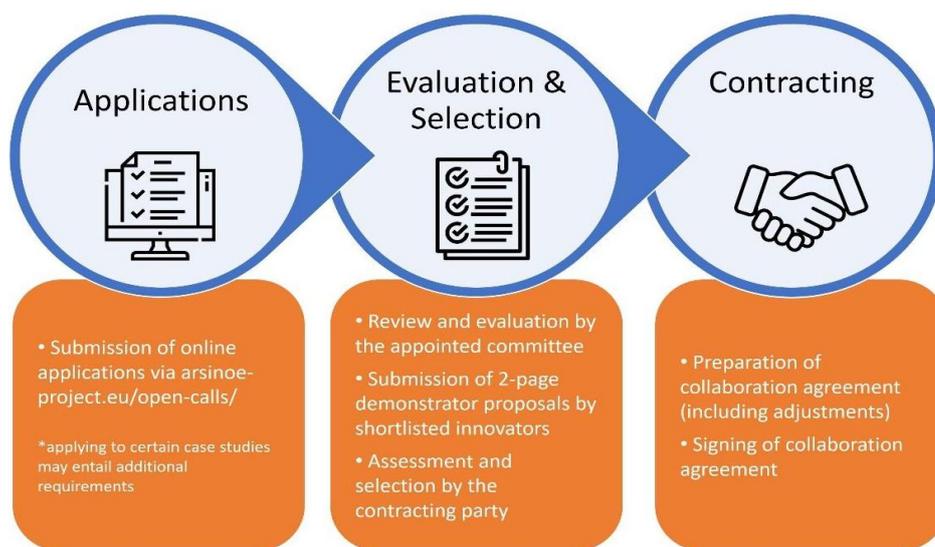
Applications will be evaluated using a common procedure and the selected ones may receive up to EUR 50.000 for demonstration activities in our 12 participating case studies across Europe. The supplementary materials found on the web page of the ARSINOE Open Tenders for Innovation provide additional information on specific budgets and requirements for each case. Please consult these carefully. A single innovator may apply to up to three case studies, but the total compensation to be received for contracted services by a legal entity shall not exceed EUR 50.000.

What do we mean by ‘innovation’?

In ARSINOE’s Open Tenders, innovation refers to the implementation of a new or significantly improved product (good or service), process, practice or organizational method¹. In the context of ARSINOE’s case studies, innovation can be desirable to introduce new, renewed, or novel means of achieving the regional stakeholders’ goals, which are self-defined and aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Innovations sourced through the Open Tenders should thus strengthen our case studies’ adaptation pathways and make our partners more able to respond effectively to their climate-driven challenges.

How are our Open Tenders for Innovations structured?

An Open Tender in ARSINOE is a process of three sequential phases which are referred to as the *Applications Phase*, the *Evaluation & Selection Phase*, and the *Contracting Phase*. See Figure 2 for an overview and Section 1.2 for the full details.



¹ Based on OECD, 2005. “The Measurement of Scientific and Technological Activities: Guidelines for Collecting and Interpreting Innovation Data: Oslo Manual, Third Edition” prepared by the Working Party of National Experts on Scientific and Technology Indicators, OECD, Paris, para. 146.

Figure 2 – The three stages of an Open Tender for Innovations in ARSINOE. Images: Freepik, Nhor Phai, and Uniconlabs all sourced from Flaticon.com.

Who is involved, how and at which stage?

BRIGAIID Connect leads and coordinates the Open Tenders for Innovations in ARSINOE. This partner is in charge of designing the tenders in close collaboration with the case study partners and of managing the process, from the preparation of texts, the online application form and reference materials to the coordination of the evaluation and selection phases.

Further, BRIGAIID Connect, the G.A.C. Group, UN SDSN and the case study partners constitute the *Evaluation Committee*. This group of consortium members review the online applications received from innovators and evaluate them using a pre-defined set of criteria and ranking scheme.

The innovators with high-ranking applications are then invited by BRIGAIID Connect to submit a 2-page demonstrator proposal. These proposals are then reviewed by the *contracting party* (i.e. the lead case study partner) and assessed following their own internal procurement procedures. The top-ranking proposal is then selected by the contracting party.

Lastly, BRIGAIID Connect notifies the innovator that their innovation has been selected and invites both parties to start the contracting phase. This includes the preparation of a draft collaboration agreement by the contracting party, its review by the innovator, any subsequent necessary rounds of revision, and finally proceeding to signatures.

IMPORTANT: *what is described above is the standard process. However, some contracting parties may have to adjust the process slightly (e.g. shift the sequence of steps, request additional materials or actions from the applicant) to fully comply with the legal requirements applicable to their organization. Where this is the case, it will be clearly stated in the supplementary materials of the individual case studies (available for download at <https://arsinoe-project.eu/open-calls-2/>). Please review those materials carefully and thoroughly before starting to prepare your application, to ensure you are on the right track to comply with all the general requirements of the tender as well as the specific requirements of the contracting party.*

1.2. General requirements

To participate in the Open Tenders, the following general requirements must be met by the applicant:

- The applicant is an established legal entity based in one of the eligible countries² at the time of submission of the online application.
- Applicants may be small- or medium-sized enterprises³, start-up companies, spin-off companies, universities or research and technology development institutes, multinationals or subsidiaries/daughter companies, NGOs, and foundations.
- Contracting of the innovation is possible without conflicting with the legal requirements that the contracting party is subject to (e.g. those associated with public procurement legislation).
- The online application has been submitted before the deadline via the ARSINOE webpage.

² Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Iceland, Norway, Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Faroe Islands, Georgia, Israel, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, UK.

³ We follow the SME definition of the EC Recommendation 2003/361/EC28 with exception of Article 3(4) of its Annex.

- The online application form has responses to all questions. Only complete applications will be considered.
- Selected innovations are available, and innovators able to conduct any testing and implementation activities, including respective results reporting, within the period between April 2024 and March 2025. The exact dates and timeline are to be agreed with the contracting party during the contracting phase.
- The innovation is relevant to the case study, i.e. it is deemed capable of contributing to addressing the challenge of the case study and to achieving its goals as they are stated in the supplementary materials published with the call.⁴

NOTE: Applicants that do not meet these general requirements will be informed via email with the reasons for the rejection. No further feedback on the process will be given. A call may be declared deserted if no applications meet the general requirements.

1.3. Which costs can be funded?

The costs that can be covered through the Open Tenders include costs related to⁵:

- Construction and installation of demonstrators;
- Software and platform development;
- Development of devices and tools;
- Payment of licenses and protected intellectual property;
- Logistics and transportation of demonstrators (or elements thereof);
- Testing and monitoring of demonstrators; and
- Conducting surveys or end-user tests.

Other costs that could be funded include⁶:

- Travel costs for meetings associated with the project;
- Access to and use of infrastructure justified for the needs of the project;
- Subcontract of services (which must be defined in their application and aligned with the purpose of the project);
- Audio/visual products and other communication activities related to the project; and
- Promotion of services and ARSINOE project innovative solutions.

NOTE: Double funding for the proposed solutions is not possible. This means that innovators who receive funds from ARSINOE following the call may not benefit at the same time from any other EU funding scheme during the duration of the contract.

2. Overview of the process

Phase I - Applications

In the first phase of the Open Tender, innovators must submit an application via the ARSINOE website (<https://arsinoe-project.eu/open-calls-2/>). The online application form contains 44 questions grouped into nine sections. They gather information on:

⁴ The applications that do not meet this requirement will be shared with the contracting party of the case study to review the decision made by BRIGAD Connect team.

⁵ Legislation regulating procurement procedures that contracting parties must comply with may restrict or rule out the coverage of some of the categories listed. Whenever this is the case, it will be clearly stated in the supplementary material accompanying the general tender text.

⁶ **NOTE on applications submitted to the Albanian case study:** innovators targeting the Albanian case study should note that only 20% of the total proposed budget may be dedicated to the “Other costs” category.

- 1) general details of the innovator
- 2) characteristics of the innovation and its relevance for the targeted ARSINOE case study
- 3) vision and potential of the innovation
- 4) technical readiness of the innovation
- 5) social transformation and governance aspects
- 6) testing feasibility
- 7) social readiness of the innovation
- 8) market readiness of the innovation
- 9) estimated budget and timeline for the demonstrator

Phase II – Evaluation & Selection

In this second phase of the Open Tender, the information collected via the online application form will be reviewed by the Evaluation Committee to evaluate the application based on a set of pre-defined criteria (see Sections 5.1.1 and 5.1.2). If necessary, the Committee may raise follow-up/clarification questions to the applicants directly via email. The high-ranking applications will be shortlisted and invited to submit a two-page proposal (see Annex 1) providing a general description of the demonstrator, the activities/tests to be performed (including an indicative timeline) and specifying the required budget for this. These two-page proposals will then be reviewed by the contracting party and assessed following their own internal procurement procedures. Selected proposals will proceed to the contract awarding phase.

Phase III - Contracting

In the third and final phase of the Open Tender, a draft collaboration agreement will be prepared by the contracting party and shared with the selected innovator for review and signature. Apart from the detailed description of responsibilities, liabilities, and innovation activities to be carried out under the contract, the document shall include a timeline for the workplan including milestones and respective results reporting. It shall also lay out the budget required to carry out the mentioned activities as well as a payment plan. The latter is to be defined by the contracting party in the contractual terms that will govern their relationship with the innovator. In some cases, the parties may wish to enter into negotiations on specific contractual terms based on the initial draft of the collaboration agreement. A two-week period will be considered for review rounds of the collaboration agreement. Once innovator and contracting party agree on all terms, they will proceed to signatures.

IMPORTANT: please be reminded that this document provides information on the general requirements and standard procedures for the ARSINOE tender. Individual case studies may have to require additional materials and actions to ensure compliance with the laws and regulations governing their own procurement procedures at national and local level. Please refer to the supplementary materials of the case study you are applying to and review them carefully before starting to prepare your application.

3. Timeline for the Second Open Tender for Innovations

The timeline of the second Open Tender follows the three-phase application process described in the previous chapter. It is as follows:

Phase I - Applications	Phase II - Evaluation & Selection	Phase III - Contracting
22 November – 08 January	09 January – 29 February	1-31 March
<p>Opening for applications: The second Open Tender launches on 22 November 2023. Applicants will need to complete and submit this online form.</p> <p>Deadline for applications: The closing date for submission of applications is 08 January 2024 at 23:59 CET.</p> <p>Two online Info Sessions for Applicants will be offered on 12 December at 14:00 CET, and 5 January 2024 at 14:00 CET to address any questions about the application process.</p>	<p>Start of the evaluation period: 09 January 2024 (immediately after the closing date for the applications phase).</p> <p>End of the evaluation period: Indicatively one month from the deadline of the online application (08 February). High-ranking applicants will be contacted via email at the latest during the second week of February and invited to submit a demonstration proposal.</p> <p>Deadline for submission of demonstration proposals: 1 week after the invitation has been received (mid-February).</p> <p>Final decision on the selection: two weeks after the demonstration proposals have been submitted (end of February).</p>	<p>Draft collaboration agreement: prepared by the contracting party and shared with the selected innovator by 8 March 2024.</p> <p>Review and revision: two-week period for negotiation and finalization of the collaboration agreement ending 22 March 2024.</p> <p>Signature: final draft of the contract agreement signed by both parties by 31 March 2024.</p> <p>NOTE on payment: the payment schedule and conditions are to be defined by the contracting party in the contractual terms that will govern their relationship with the innovator.</p>

4. Applications

○ 4.1. Submissions

Submission of online applications will be carried out via the ARSINOE website (and specific case studies may require following additional procedures in parallel – consult the supplementary materials found on the ARSINOE Open Tenders web page carefully). To successfully submit their application, innovators are required to:

- Review carefully the supplementary case study materials accompanying the general call text. Although ARSINOE is equally interested in technical, social and governance innovations, some case studies may be exclusively or particularly interested in one of these categories. Applicants should keep this in mind when answering the questions.
- Read carefully and answer all the questions. Only complete applications will be considered. Please note that it is not possible to upload additional material.
- English is the official language of ARSINOE. Applications submitted in any other language will not be considered.
- Be as clear and concrete as possible. The information collected from the online application form will be used to evaluate the application.
- Responses are saved and submitted when a respondent clicks the Next button on each page of the survey. Responses don't automatically save as each question is answered—they are saved and submitted page by page as respondents progress through the survey.
- As long as you use the same computer and browser and do not erase the cookies, you can return to the survey to pick up where you left off and/or edit previous responses. However, we recommend you to plan enough time to complete the form at once.
- As long as you use the same computer and browser and do not erase the cookies, you can change your answers on any survey page even after you complete the survey.
- You can't print a record of your answers after you complete the survey.
- Send one online application form per innovation. Applicants applying with several innovations must complete one individual online application form for each innovation. Applicants are asked to specify the name of the innovation in question 1.
- If you are sending more than one application, please use a different browser or computer, or erase the cookies.
- Applicants will also have the option to download and read the [list of questions](#) beforehand, but it is compulsory to submit the application via the common portal on the ARSINOE website.

NOTE: It is strongly recommended not to wait until the last minute to submit the online form. Inability to meet the call deadline (including technical issues and/or communication delays on the applicant's side), will automatically lead to rejection of the submission. The time of receipt of the completed online form as recorded by the submission system will be final.

○ 4.2. Support and submission errors

Two online Info Sessions will be offered after the launching of the call. These will allow applicants to express their doubts or questions and receive guidance about the application process. Moreover, ARSINOE offers a dedicated FAQs document available at the following [link](#).

If your questions are not already in the FAQs document, you may address them to info@brigaidconnect.com. Please formulate your questions generically, as all submitted questions will be included in [this document](#) (i.e. both question and answer will be made available to all applicants). No

personal information will be made public. If you have a specific question regarding a case study info@brigaidconnect.com can refer you to the relevant case study contact.

Should the applicant discover an error in their submitted application form, and provided the call deadline has not yet passed, they can come back to the online application form and resubmit it. Please note that you can only come back to your online form as long as you use the same computer, browser and did not erase the cookies. Only the latest version submitted before the call deadline will be considered for evaluation. Please note that re-submissions or inquiries about the submission system or the call itself, received after the closing of the call will neither be considered nor answered.

5. Evaluation, selection, and contracting

The review and evaluation of the submitted applications is performed by the ARSINOE Evaluation Committee. A schematic overview of the evaluation process is presented in the following sections.

5.1. Evaluation

Who is involved?

For the evaluation process, an Evaluation Committee is formed for each case study with ARSINOE consortium partners. The leaders and co-leaders of the case studies represent the interests of their stakeholders, whereas BRIGAIID Connect, G.A.C Group and/or UN SDSN (United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network) accompany as independent evaluators to ensure the transparency and neutrality of the process. Applications submitted must thus indicate to which challenges and case study they are being addressed (the online application form contemplates this). Applications of a single innovation can be submitted to a maximum of three case studies.

On the receiving end, BRIGAIID Connect will distribute applications accordingly to the respective Evaluation Committee for their review and evaluation. Concretely, the group that will evaluate all applications sent to an individual case study will be composed of 1 representative from BRIGAIID Connect, G.A.C. and/or UNSDSN and 2-3 representatives of the respective Case Study partners (all of them ARSINOE consortium partners). I.e., each application will be evaluated by at least three evaluators. Each evaluator will evaluate the applications independently using seven pre-defined criteria (as indicated in the following sections) and will then meet with the other evaluators from the committee to discuss the final ranking for their respective case study.

What are the evaluation criteria?

The evaluation procedure in the ARSINOE Open Tenders has been adapted from the one developed and employed during the BRIGAIID H2020 project (2017-2020)⁷. In broad terms, the online applications will be evaluated considering **seven criteria**, with the weight to the total score per case study being as indicated in Table 1:

⁷ Terpstra, T., Contreras, S, and Willems, P. Internal report for selection of innovations: Selection of external innovations from stocktaking cycle 1. Internal consortium document of the BRIGAIID (Bridging the Gap for Innovations in Disaster Resilience) Project.

Table 1. Evaluation criteria weights for each case study participating in the second ARSINOE Open Tender for Innovations.

		CS1 Athens	CS2 Piraeus	CS2 Valencia	CS2 Cyprus	CS4 N. Macedonia	CS4 Albania
Types of readiness	Technical Readiness	15	20	15	20	30	15
	Social Readiness	14	20	10	10	15	14
	Market Readiness	14	10	20	20	10	13
Qualitative criteria	Testing Feasibility	14	10	15	10	20	15
	Innovator Vision	14	20	15	20	5	14
	Promising Innovation	15	10	15	10	10	15
	Contribution to Social and Governance Transformation	14	10	10	10	10	14

Table 1. Evaluation criteria weights for each case study participating in the second ARSINOE Open Tender for Innovations (continued).

		CS6 Turkey	CS6 Romania	CS6 Bulgaria	CS7 Denmark	CS8 UK	CS9 Italy
Types of readiness	Technical Readiness	40	16	16	15	14	16
	Social Readiness	10	14	13	20	16	15
	Market Readiness	10	10	16	7	10	15
Qualitative criteria	Testing Feasibility	15	20	16	15	18	12
	Innovator Vision	5	10	14	8	14	14
	Promising Innovation	10	14	13	15	12	14
	Contribution to Social and Governance Transformation	10	16	12	20	16	14



Three types of readiness that are important for the successful development and market introduction of an innovation are defined: technical, social and market readiness.

- The **technical readiness** of an innovation is meant as a measure of its maturity and follows the widely accepted Technology Readiness Level scale. ARSINOE supports innovations that are at a TRL that is deemed fit to the needs of the respective Case Study. If the innovator does not consider the technical readiness as applicable to their innovation, the weight of this criterion will be equally distributed among the rest of the criteria.
- The **social readiness** of an innovation is a measure of the extent to which an innovation could be accepted by end users and the innovator's previous consideration of challenges, barriers and requirements from end users.
- The **market readiness** is a measure of an innovation's potential to develop a solid business case and to attract clients and investors in a real market environment.

Other criteria are feasibility (if the innovation will be tested), the innovator's vision, the extent to which an innovation is seen as 'promising', and the expected contribution to social and governance transformation. The background for these criteria is as follows:

- **Testing feasibility:** Testing feasibility is a measure of the likelihood that the planned testing and demonstration activities may lead to improvement and further development of the innovation to reach the next Technical and Social Readiness levels, while contributing to address the case study's challenge. If the innovator and contracting party do not intend to run a formal test of the design of the innovation under the ARSINOE demonstrator, the weight of this criterion will be equally distributed between the rest of the criteria.
- **Innovator's vision:** ARSINOE supports innovators, but the innovator is responsible for pushing the innovation towards the market. Vision is understood as the extent to which the innovator has a clear strategy to improve the innovation and push it forward in and beyond ARSINOE to reach the market.
- **Promising innovation:** some innovations catch attention immediately because they are completely new, inspiring, and seem 'spot on' because of their high potential to reduce climate-related risks (i.e., high effectiveness). Such innovations may be less easy to develop and/or implement because there are no similar examples that have straightened the development path before them. ARSINOE aims to support those promising innovations and scores them higher to increase their chance of being selected.
- **Contribution to social and governance transformation** is a measure of the degree to which the innovation can be expected to contribute to cover adaptation needs from a perspective of driving or helping to drive social, policy and institutional change.

5.2. How will evaluators score the applications?

Evaluators will score individual online applications considering the criteria described above. Each criterion will yield a score from 1 to 5. Decimal scores may be given. For each criterion under examination, score values correspond to the following assessments:

Result	Score	Details
Very poor	1	The criterion is addressed inadequately, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
Poor	2	While the application broadly addresses the criterion, there are significant weaknesses.
Fair	3	The application addresses the criterion well, although improvements would be necessary.
Good	4	The application addresses the criterion very well, although certain improvements are still possible.
Excellent	5	The application successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question. Any shortcomings are minor.

NOTE: The detailed evaluation and gathered information will remain confidential for use only within the ARSINOE consortium.

5.3. How will the results be handled and communicated?

The process and communication along the three phases of the Open Tenders will be as follows:

Phase I – Applications

The online form will be evaluated based on the criteria described previously. Evaluation results from the online application forms will be compiled into a short Evaluation Summary Report (ESR), which will be sent out to applicants after being approved by the respective Selection Committee.

The high-ranking applications will be identified per case study, considering a minimum average score of 21/35 for the overall score. The remaining candidates above the threshold will be included in a backup candidate pool. If no applicants reach the 21/35 overall score, the call may be declared deserted.

Depending on the evaluation outcome applicants will receive via email:

- **Shortlisting letter**, including the ESR and the invitation to send a 2-page demonstration proposal and additional instructions.
- **Rejection letter**, including the ESR and notification of inclusion in the backup candidate pool, if applicable.

**Phase II –
Evaluation &
Selection**

The high-ranking applications will each be invited to send a 2-page demonstration proposal (See Annex 1 for details). The proposals received will be assessed by the contracting party.

Depending on the outcome of the proposal/technical report assessments, applicants will receive via email:

- **An acceptance letter**, including the invitation to the contracting phase and following steps; or
- **A rejection letter**, including the notification of inclusion in the backup candidate pool, if applicable.

The list of selected innovators will be published on the ARSINOE website.

**Phase III –
Contracting**

The selected applicants will sign a contract of up to EUR 50K. The goal of the contracting phase is to lay out and agree on the legal contractual terms to govern the collaboration between the contracting party and each selected applicant. The contract will be based on the application and the proposal/technical report and shall include a detailed description of the activities to be contracted as well as the start and end date of each (including reporting of final results). These terms are to be agreed by the selected applicant and the respective contracting party.



Annex 1: Indicative outline of the two-page demonstration proposal

As explained in section 5.3, the shortlisted (high-ranked) applicants per case study will be invited to submit a two-page demonstration proposal. At this stage applicants can provide additional details that were not included in the online application. They should strive to provide as much valuable information as possible considering the two-page limit.

Below are some of the tentative information points that the demonstration proposal should include:

- Innovation and applicant's name
- The problem - Define the problem (i.e. the specific need of the case study) being solved by your innovation.
- Your pilot solution – a general description of the demonstrator including all its elements and its expected achievements and foreseen limitations.
- The detailed activities to perform, including a timeline and milestones, and required funds per activity.
- The team and their related expertise.