

PROJECT

POLREC



Guide for Applicants

Internationalisation Open call – Matchmaking mission





1. Table of contents

| | | |
|------|--|----|
| 2. | Abbreviations, acronyms and European Commission disclaimer | 3 |
| 3. | Introduction on POLREC project | 4 |
| 3.1 | Basic information about POLREC activities | 4 |
| 3.2 | Basic information about the POLREC Internationalisation Open Call –Matchmaking mission | 4 |
| 4. | Scope and expectations | 5 |
| 4.1 | Type of actions supported | 5 |
| 4.2 | Expected impacts | 7 |
| 5. | Eligibility conditions | 7 |
| 6. | Funding conditions..... | 8 |
| 7. | Calendar for evaluation and implementation of activities | 8 |
| 8. | Application process..... | 9 |
| 9. | Evaluation and selection | 9 |
| 9.1 | Evaluation criteria | 9 |
| 9.2 | Evaluation and ranking for selected projects..... | 10 |
| 9.3 | Information to the applicants | 11 |
| 9.4 | Complaint procedure | 11 |
| 10. | Signature of financial agreement and payment of the sub-grant | 12 |
| 10.1 | Sub-grant agreement signature | 12 |
| 10.2 | Payment procedure | 12 |
| 10.3 | Implementation and reporting | 12 |
| 11. | Helpdesk..... | 12 |
| 12. | Confidentiality, GDPR protection & intellectual property rights..... | 13 |
| 13. | Double funding..... | 13 |
| 14. | Financial Capacity | 13 |





2. Abbreviations, acronyms and European Commission disclaimer

Table 1 – List of POLREC partners

| Partner short name | Partner | Country |
|--------------------|--|---------|
| POL | Polymeris | FR |
| CEN | Centro Tecnológico da Indústria de Moldes, Ferramentas Especiais e Plásticos | PT |
| MAV | Clúster de Materials Avançats de Catalunya | ES |
| PCD | Plast Center Danmark | DK |
| WFG | Wirtschaftsförderung Raum Heilbronn GmbH | DE |



**Funded by
the European Union**

The POLREC project is funded by the European Commission Joint Cluster initiatives for Europe's recovery (Euroclusters) under the Single Market Programme (SMP COSME) Grant Agreement number 101074434. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or EISMEA. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.





3. Introduction on POLREC project

The POLREC project is a collaborative project between the 4 European clusters and a technological centre: [Polymeris](#) (coordinator), [CENTIMFE](#), [Cluster Mav](#), [PCD/DMN](#) and [WFG](#). It started on the 1st of September 2022 and will end on the 31st of August 2025. It is funded by the European Commission Joint Cluster initiatives for Europe's recovery (Euroclusters) under the Single Market Programme (SMP COSME) Grant Agreement 101074434.

It focuses on sustainable development and recycling of high and low value polymers as a contribution to the objectives of the European Green Deal aiming at zero CO₂ emissions in 2050 and to increase the European strategic autonomy on raw materials for polymer production.

During the project period of 3 years the consortium will explore how an intensified cluster and business network collaboration across borders and across sectors can meet this challenge and exploit the international business opportunities related to this topic.

3.1 Basic information about POLREC activities

POLREC will support companies on the following topics:

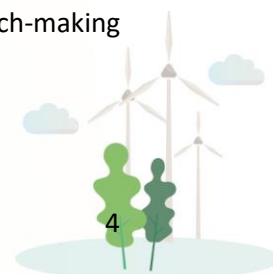
1. Network to improve the resilience of the EU industrial ecosystems by developing value chain interlinkages in the EU Single Market.
2. Innovate for strategic autonomy to build capacity in the most critical supplies of their ecosystems.
3. Adopt processes and technologies to reinforce transformation into a greener and more digital economy.
4. Train to foster up- and re-skilling of the workforce whilst attracting talents.
5. Go international to boost access to global supply and value chains.
6. Outreach to attract economic actors, mainly small or medium sized enterprises (SMEs), beyond Euroclusters' locations.

One of the means to provide this support is an open calls mechanism aiming to support European SMEs in developing solutions related to polymer & elastomer recycling, training on recycling technologies, networking and matchmaking in Europe and beyond.

3.2 Basic information about the POLREC Internationalisation Open Call –Matchmaking mission

POLREC Internationalisation Open Call - Matchmaking mission provides financial support to SMEs working in polymers & elastomers industries on recycling solutions (mechanical, chemical and digitalisation of process & traceability) to participate in an international matchmaking mission organised in Quebec, Canada, from the 3rd to the 7th of February 2025.

Under this Open Call, the POLREC consortium will select up to 36 SMEs for the international match-making mission, for a maximum total budget of 132 000 EUR.





The call is open from 31/05/2024 to 31/08/2024 at 12:00AM CET. The link to the application documents and to submit your proposition can be found on the [Cluster Submission Platform](#). A first POLREC call was organised from 22 March to 24 May on this topic (POLREC Internationalisation Open call) with a sub-topic covering the participation to the Canada matchmaking mission.

The table below presents the financing opportunity. An SME can apply to different POLREC Open Calls, provided that the total amount granted under different applications does not exceed 60,000€. An SME can submit only one application for the Open call Internationalisation - Matchmaking-mission. In case an SME submits several applications for the call, the last one will be the only one considered and evaluated by the POLREC consortium.

| POLREC Open call | Max budget per SME | Max number of funded SMEs | Opening & closing dates | Max amount available in € |
|---|--------------------|---------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| Internationalisation – Match-making mission | 3,600 EUR | 36 | 31st of May to 31st of August 2024 at 12.00 CET | 132 000 EUR |

4. Scope and expectations

The POLREC Internationalisation Open call - Match-making mission focuses on SMEs from plastic, rubbers, and composites industries to facilitate their internationalization strategy and connect to new markets outside their national scope through the participation to a match-making mission organised in the Quebec province, in Canada.

The SMEs targeted by this call can cover various sectors, such as: transport and mobility, construction, renewable energy, digital and electronics, health, consumer goods, industrial and food packaging.

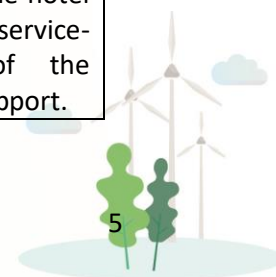
4.1 Type of actions supported

The SME will receive funding to cover its expenses for participating to the match-making mission organised in Quebec from the 3rd to the 7th of February 2025 by the POLREC consortium.

- **Financial contribution:**

The foreseen financial contribution is described below:

| Type of expenses | Total financial contribution per person for the 5 days of the mission | Type of payment |
|------------------|---|--|
| Flights | 1,000€ per person | Booked and to be paid by each participant considering the timetable for arrivals and departure set in the agenda. |
| Accommodation | 600€ per person for 4 nights | To be paid by each participant before October 2024 at the hotel pre-booked by POLREC's service-provider in charge of the organisation & logistics support. |





| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Restauration | 750€ per person for 5 days | To be paid by each participant at each restaurant during the match-making mission. |
| Transportation | Between 170€ and 250€ per person for 5 days, depending on the final number of participants to the mission (| To be paid by each participant to the service-provider in charge of the organisation & logistics support before 31st of October 2024. |
| Organisation of a networking event for the European delegation on Day 1 and a match-making event with the Canadian partners on Day 3 (catering, room renting & organisation fees) and logistic support of the service-provider (pre-booking of accommodation, restaurants, transportation and support in organisation of the site-visits) | 1,000€ per person | To be paid by each participant to the service-provider in charge of the organisation & logistics support before 31st of October 2024. |

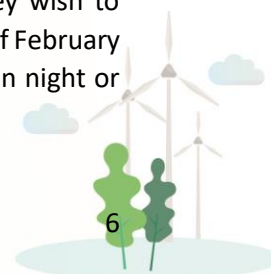
The total sub-grant reserved for each successful applicant will be maximum 3,600 EUR. After being awarded, each participant will sign the sub-grant agreement validating that they accept to follow the payment procedure described in **section 6** according to the financial contribution described above. If the participant does not follow the payment procedure to the service-provider and the booking of flights and hotels within the required deadlines, the POLREC's consortium reserve the right to remove the participant from the match-making mission, cancel its awarded sub-grant and award another participant from the waiting list.

- **Tentative agenda of the match-making mission**

The POLREC partners, led by Polymeris, will work in close collaboration with Canadian clusters from the plastics, composites and rubbers industries as well as internationalisation partners and a service-provider to organise the on-site visits and matchmaking meetings and ensure the relevance for the SME's projects and activities.

The overall agenda of the mission with the arrival and departure date as well as the main milestone and events has been designed and can be find below as a tentative agenda for the match-making mission from the 3rd to the 7th of February 2025. This agenda is still under construction and will be more defined according to the participant's needs and expectations. A final version of the agenda will be presented in November 2024 to all participants.

Please note that POLREC project partners reserve the right to modify the location of the hotels as well as the schedules of site-visits and matchmaking event. The dates of arrival and departure will remain unchanged so that participants can book their flights as soon as they receive the notification letter informing them that they are awarded. Participants can arrive earlier and leave later if they wish to schedule additional business meetings on Monday the 3rd of February 2025 or on Friday the 7th of February 2025 in the afternoon. Please note that any additional cost such as additional accommodation night or transportation will be at the participant's own charge.





| Time & Dates | Monday 03.02.2025 | Tuesday 04.02.2025 | Wednesday 05.02.2025 | Thursday 06.02.2025 | Friday 07.02.2025 |
|-----------------------|--|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 9.00-12.30 | Travelling & arrival in Montreal (Check-in hotel) | Transfer to Sherbrooke & site-visits | Match-making event with Canadian partners | Site-visits | Transfer to Montreal |
| 12.30 – 14.00 | | Lunch | | Lunch | |
| 14.00 – 17.00 | | Site-visit | | Site-visit | Free time/ Departure |
| 17-19.00 | Presentation of the Canadian ecosystem | Site-visit | Transfer to Quebec | Free time | |
| 19.00 -21.00 | Networking reception reserved to the European delegation | Diner | Diner | Diner | |
| Location of the hotel | Montreal | Sherbrooke | Quebec | Quebec | |

4.2 Expected impacts

The main impact of the POLREC project shall be to obtain a reduction in incineration and/or landfill of the SME's plastic and/or rubber waste fractions approaching the overall goal of a reduction in CO₂-emissions.

Applicants should be able to find new markets, new procurement opportunities or strengthening important business relationships in the Canadian market. The visits and delegations to countries outside of the applicants own country should lead to new projects, value chain collaboration to increase the use of recycled plastic or rubber materials or the use of products made from recycled plastic or rubber materials.

5. Eligibility conditions

To be eligible, applicants must satisfy all the following conditions:

1. Be a legal entity.
2. Be a small or medium sized enterprise (SME) in accordance with the [SME definition of the European Union](#). An SME self-assessment tool is available [via this link](#).
3. Apply as an individual organization.
4. Be a SME located in one of the Single Market Programme (SMP) associated countries
 - EU Member States
5. Other countries which participate in [Single Market Programme \(SMP\)/COSME Strand \(https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/smp/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation_smp_en.pdf\)](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/smp/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation_smp_en.pdf)
6. The participant representing the SME in the match-making mission must be over 21 years-old.





7. Implement or plan to implement the recycling of polymer/elastomer wastes or digital solutions for recycling processes.

The SMEs targeted by this call can cover various sectors, such as: transport and mobility, construction, renewable energy, digital and electronics, health, consumer goods, industrial and food packaging.

Applications must be written in English and complete in all the parts indicated in application form. Only parts written in English will be evaluated.

SMEs that are under liquidation, in financial difficulty, or 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 are not eligible to apply for funding.

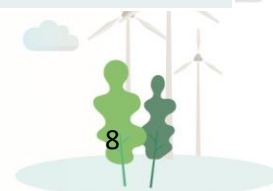
6. Funding conditions

Successful applications will receive the requested financial contribution in the form of a lump-sum according to the following schedule:

- A pre-payment of up to 1,250€ (depending on the final amount due for transportation as per table provided in section 4.1) from the total sub-grant will be provided to the awarded applicant after the proof of its payment of up to 1,250€ for the organisation & logistics support to the service-provider before 31st of October 2024. This financial contribution will allow the service-provider to pay the transportation, pre-book the hotels and restaurants and organise the events hold during the mission (catering, room booking, programme etc.). The pre-payment will be transferred in November 2024 by Polymeris, after receiving the proof of payment from the awarded applicant. If an awarded applicant fails to provide proof of payment within the required deadline, it will be removed from the matchmaking mission, its awards will be cancelled and an applicant from the waiting list will be awarded and invited to participate to the matchmaking mission.
- The final payment of the remaining sub-grant (i.e. up to 2,350€) will be provided to the applicant after its participation to the match-making mission and its completion of a report on the mission's impact on the internationalisation strategy of the SME outside the EU.

7. Calendar for evaluation and implementation of activities

| International Match-making mission sub-grant | |
|---|-------------------------|
| Step | Dates |
| POLREC Internationalisation open call – Matchmaking mission open for submissions of proposals | 31 May - 31 August 2024 |
| Evaluation & Selection of winners | 2 – 20 September 2024 |
| Notification letters sent out to candidates | 23 – 27 September 2024 |





| | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1-hour of individual meeting scheduled between POLREC partners and each awarded SME to better defined the SME's needs & expectations on the match-making programme | 23 September – 31 October 2024 |
| Pre-payment of the service-provider by the awarded applicant (1,250€) | Before 31st of October 2024 |
| Pre-financing of up to 1,250€ from the total sub-grant to the awarded applicant upon proof of payment to the service-provider | November 2024 |
| Presentation of the final programme of the match-making mission | November 2024 |
| Dates of the match-making mission | 03-07 February 2025 |
| Final payment of up to 2,350€ upon delivery of the final deliverable on match-making mission | 2 months after the end of the mission |

8. Application process

Applicants must submit their proposal for POLREC Internationalisation Open Call – Matchmaking mission on the [Cluster Submission Platform](#) by logging in the platform and filling-in the required fields. If the applicant does not already have an account on this platform, it must create one to access to the application form. Once logged in, the applicant must complete the questions required by the platform and click on “Validate and Submit” at the end of the application process to submit its application.

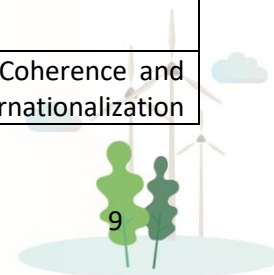
Applicants will receive an e-mail confirming that their application has been successfully submitted. Applications to the POLREC Internationalisation Open Call – Matchmaking mission have to be submitted exclusively via the Cluster Submission Platform. No other documents are needed at this stage of the application process.

9. Evaluation and selection

Each application will be assessed by a POLREC project partner according to the following criteria.

9.1 Evaluation criteria

| Criteria | Weighting score | Maximum note | Description |
|---|-----------------|--------------|---|
| 1. Relevance of the SME activities in Polymer recycling | 20% | 4 points | The SME is active, or planning to be active, in the field of polymer (rubbers, plastics, composites) recycling or digitalization of recycling processes & traceability. These activities are in link with POLREC's main objective to support the European industry to switch practices from polymers waste landfilling and burning towards polymer recycling (mechanical or chemical) into raw materials (monomer, polymer and additive). |
| 2. Strategical preparedness for | 30% | 4 points | Strategical capacity and capability: Coherence and preparedness of the SME internationalization |





| | | | |
|--|-----|----------|---|
| internationalisation strategy | | | <p>strategy outside of EU markets (either on-going or planned strategy) corresponding with at least one of the POLREC’s specific objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop alliances between SME looking to recycle their polymer wastes and SMEs willing to source recycled material and secondary raw materials. - Develop alliances between SME looking to implement innovative solutions and SMEs providing polymer recycling & digital solutions. - Foster the adoption of innovative chemical & mechanical recycling processes as well as digital solutions for recycled material quality monitoring and traceability by positioning SME on R&D and business opportunities within and outside the EU. - Engage in an exchange of knowledge, experience, and technologies with non-EU-countries |
| 3. Organizational capacity and capability for internationalization | 20% | 4 points | Readiness level of the SME for internationalization strategy, financial and administrative resources to develop international partnership. |
| 4. Relevance of the project/interest of the SME for Canada | 30% | 4 points | The SME demonstrate its interest and the relevance for its internationalization strategy and future activity to participate to a match-making mission in Quebec, Canada. |

Points from 1 to 4 will be assigned to each of the criteria. Only full scores will be given for each individual criterion. The meaning of the points is as follows:

- 4 Exceeds expectations
- 3 Meets expectations
- 2 Needs development
- 1 Below expectations

The final number of points of each application will be calculated as an average of the individual assessments provided by each evaluator.

To be considered for receiving the sub-grant, the minimum threshold for each criterion will be 2 points and the minimum total pass note will be 8 points out of the 16 total maximum points. Each criterion has a specific weighting score as described in the table above. The applications with the highest total score will be selected within the limit of the available budget, in descending order. Obtaining the minimum pass number of points does not guarantee that the application will receive funding.

9.2 Evaluation and ranking for selected projects

After the external evaluation process, a ranking list will be defined where all the applications will be ranked according to their final scores. In the case of ties, priority will be given to projects with partners coming from countries outside of POLREC partner’s countries, with a specific attention to EU-13 countries





(Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia).

Successful proposals above the minimum pass score (per criterion and in total) are funded in descending order until the available sum for the call is totally assigned. The proposals that scored above the threshold but did not manage to obtain funding will be placed on a waiting list. In the event of the withdrawal or eviction of an awarded applicant due to its failure to provide requested document to confirm its SME status or to follow the payment procedure, an applicant from the waiting list (in descending order) will be awarded instead and invited to sign a sub-grant agreement.

The final shortlist will be prepared by the POLREC coordinator (Polymeris). The assessment period will take up to 30 days for the Internationalisation Open call - Matchmaking mission.

9.3 Information to the applicants

Following the evaluation phase, the applicants will be informed about the outcome of the evaluations. The evaluation results will be sent to the main applicant's e-mail address associated with the application according to the Open Call calendar described in section 7 of the Guide for Applicant:

- A rejection letter in the event of the failure of the application.
- Or a notification letter for successful application. The instructions for the next steps will be described.

9.4 Complaint procedure

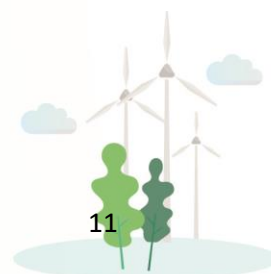
If after receiving the evaluation results an applicant disagrees with the result, a complaint can be sent (in English) to the project coordinator's e-mail (roxane.girard@polymeris.fr) within 3 working days following the official receipt of the evaluation result. The following information must be included:

- contact details and name of the applicant
- the call that was applied to
- the subject of the complaint
- information and evidence regarding the alleged breach.

In case a complaint is received, a re-evaluation will only be carried out if there is evidence of a shortcoming affecting the final decision on whether to fund the proposal.

The Review Committee will consist of the project coordinator Polymeris and Wirtschaftsförderung Raum Heilbronn GmbH. It will examine the complaint based on the information brought forward by the applicant and decide whether the complaint is justified or not and will inform the applicant and the consortium on the decision taken.

If the complaint is considered justified, the Review Committee will notify a POLREC project partner, different to the one which has done the initial evaluation and ask the partner to re-evaluate the application and specifically the assessment part, subject to the complaint. The evaluator will then provide the Review Committee with an updated assessment. The final decision on the complaint will be communicated by the Review Committee to the applicant in writing within 14 working days from the date of submitting the complaint.





10. Signature of financial agreement and payment of the sub-grant

The winning applicants selected for funding will firstly have to provide an administrative document to prove their SME status to confirm their eligibility as well as the details of the bank account on which the funding will be transferred. Applicants will have a maximum delay of 10 working days after receiving their notification letter to provide the requested documentation.

The POLREC Consortium will proceed to verification of these documents to make sure the selected applications are eligible in a delay of 15 working days.

10.1 Sub-grant agreement signature

If all eligibility conditions are met and confirmed, the SMEs selected for funding will be invited to sign a Financial Sub-Grant Agreement with the POLREC partner Polymeris (POL). This Sub-Grant Agreement details all rights and duties of the SMEs funded in the framework of the POLREC Internationalisation Open Call – Matchmaking mission.

10.2 Payment procedure

- A pre-payment of up to 1,250€ from the total sub-grant will be provided to the applicant after the proof of its payment of up to 1,250€ for the organisation & logistics support to the service-provider before the 31st of October 2024. This payment is dedicated to pay the transportation, pre-booking of the hotels and restaurants and organisation the events hold during the mission (catering, room booking, programme etc.) by a service-provider selected by the organisers. The pre-payment from POLREC sub-grant will be transferred in November 2024, after receiving the proof of payment from the participant.
- If an awarded applicant fails to provide proof of payment within the required deadline, it will be removed from the matchmaking mission, its awards will be cancelled and an applicant from the waiting list will be awarded and invited to participate to the matchmaking mission.
- The final payment of the remaining sub-grant (up to 2,350€) will be provided to the applicant after its participation to the match-making mission and its completion of a short report on the match-making mission impact and international strategy outside the EU.

Further details will be found in the Sub-Grant Agreement.

10.3 Implementation and reporting

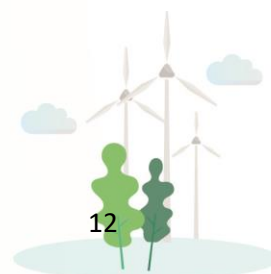
The awarded applicants will participate to the matchmaking mission and the events organised prior to departure to present the programme and meet the other participants of the mission. The applicants will have to fill out the Final Activity report after attending the matchmaking mission in order to receive the final payment.

The beneficiaries must keep the original documents of their expenses in case of an audit for a period of at least 5 years after the end of the POLREC project (at least until end of August 2030).

11. Helpdesk

For any enquiries regarding information and/ or clarification about the present call, please contact one of the POLREC National Contact point listed:

- Denmark: dwb@plastcenter.dk
- France (coordinator): roxane.girard@polymeris.fr
- Germany: wolf@wfgheilbronn.de





- Spain: clusterdematerials@outlook.es
- Portugal: tania.mendes@centimfe.com

Applicants located in other EU countries are invited to contact POLREC's coordinator should they have any question on the application process.

12. Confidentiality, GDPR protection & intellectual property rights

A full list of applicants will be prepared containing their basic information for statistical purposes and clarity, which will be also shared with the European Commission for transparency.

The applicants' list will not be public but will serve as statistics in project communication materials.

To process and evaluate proposals, the POLREC consortium will need to collect personal and industrial data. The POLREC project coordinator will act as a Data Controller for data submitted through the Cluster Submission platform. [The Cluster Submission platform](#)'s system design and operational procedures ensure that data are managed in compliance with The General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR). Each applicant will accept the Cluster Submission platform terms to ensure coverage.

The final list of the awarded beneficiaries will be made public, including name of the projects, abstract, legal name of the companies, sector, country/region of origins.

For dissemination and use of results generated through the financial support from POLREC, the SMEs must credit the POLREC project through proper citation and appearance of the POLREC logo and EU Logo, including the proper citation: "This project is funded by the European Commission Joint Cluster initiatives for Europe's recovery (Euroclusters) under the Single Market Programme (SMP COSME) grant agreement number 101074434".

13. Double funding

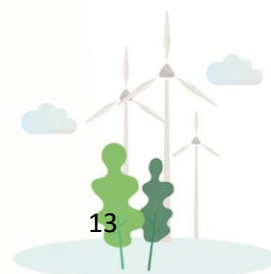
The SME applicant cannot apply for and/or receive funding outside of POLREC EUROCLUSTER for a similar project that could lead to a potential double funding of the same action. The POLREC EUROCLUSTER Consortium may carry out the necessary control actions with other SMP Eurocluster Consortia and other EU-funded projects to verify that there is no double funding ongoing.

14. Financial Capacity

The SME applicant must have the financial capacity to carry out the actions described in their proposals and to properly manage the financial support granted to them.

Each SME must be in alignment with the following situations:

- ✓ Is no bankrupt or being wound up, is not having affairs administrated by the courts, has not entered into an arrangement with creditors, has not suspended business activities, is not the subject of proceedings concerning those matters or is not in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- ✓ Is in compliance with its obligation relating to the payment of social security contributions and the payment of taxes, in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which it is established;
- ✓ Is not subject to a conflict of interest in connection with the grant.

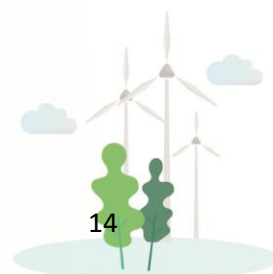




PROJECT INFO

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Grant Agreement | Project 101074434 — POLREC |
| Programme | Single Market Programme (SMP COSME) |
| Call | SMP-COSME-2021-CLUSTER |
| Topic | SMP-COSME-2021-CLUSTER-01 |
| Type of action | SMP Grants for Financial Support |
| Project Title | Supporting a green and resilient Europe through POLymer RECYcling |
| Project starting date | 1 st September 2022 |
| Project end date | 31 st August 2025 |
| Project duration | 36 months |

PROJECT CONSORTIUM



PROJECT

POLREC



Funded by
the European Union

Written by and Roxane Girard (Polymeris)



POLYMERIS

Pôle de compétitivité des caoutchoucs, plastiques et composites

