

# Regional Innovation Challenge (RIC)

Ideas for Tomorrow

Guidelines to Applicants

mis en oeuvre conjointement par



Financ  par l'Union europ enne

sur financement de

July 2024

## **PRIVACY STATEMENT**

The information requested on the application form is solicited by the “consortium” constituted by the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) and the Mauritius Research and Innovation Council (MRIC). It will be used in connection with the selection of qualified ideas and may be disclosed to qualified experts and the staff of the “Consortium” as part of the review process, award decisions, or the administration of awards. To perform its contractual obligations, the “Consortium” collects, processes, and stores personal data (including sensitive personal data) of its data subjects. The “Consortium” treats these personal data collected as private and confidential. The “Consortium” abides by all data protection laws as may be applicable, including the Mauritian Data Protection Act 2017 and the EU General Data Protection Regulation (“GDPR”). We have implemented organisational, physical and technical safeguards, thus ensuring protection (of personal data collected) from: unauthorized access, misuse and/or unauthorized disclosure. We are also committed to being transparent about how personal data of our data subjects are collected and used. For more information, please refer to the MRIC Privacy Statement on our website: [www.mric.mu](http://www.mric.mu)

Note: Application ideas not meeting content requirements which are listed and explained in this solicitation will not be considered.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

<b>1. INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. AIM AND OBJECTIVES .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>3. ELIGIBILITY .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1. EVALUATION .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2. PROCESS .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Stage 1 – Application .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Stage 2 – Administrative Screening .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Stage 3 – Pre-selection .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Stage 4 – Selection/Audition Phase .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Stage 5 – Ideas Acceleration .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Stage 6 – Country Final .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Stage 7- Regional Final .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>6. SEED FUNDING AND DURATION .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>7. ALLOWABLE AND NON-ALLOWABLE EXPENSES FOR SEED MONEY .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Allowable Expenses .....	3
Non-allowable Expenses .....	3
<b>8. DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>8.1 Budget Reallocation .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. PRIZE .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>9. DISCLAIMER .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>10. DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>11. CONTACT US .....</b>	<b>4</b>

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The **Indian Ocean Commission** is the only African regional intergovernmental organisation dedicated to islands and covers the islands in the region of the South-West Indian Ocean. It has an established headquarters in Mauritius and nearly four decades of cooperation, with support from many international partners.

The IOC promotes regional solidarity through cooperation projects covering a wide range of sectors: preservation of ecosystems, sustainable management of natural resources, maritime safety, entrepreneurship, public health, renewable energy, and culture. While ensuring that the principles of coordination, complementarity and subsidiarity are respected, the IOC assumes an advisory role, and even a leadership role, in areas where its Member States need specific support and where collective action constitutes an added value. IOC's mission is, therefore, to federate forces, pool resources, raise awareness of the challenges facing developing islands and promote the south-western Indian Ocean.

The **Mauritius Research and Innovation Council (MRIC)** formerly known as the Mauritius Research Council, is a corporate body set up on the 1st of September 2019 through the proclamation of the Mauritius Research and Innovation Council Act 2019. The activities of the Council are focused on the main objective of promoting, coordinating, and exploiting research with a view to sharpening the competitive edge of industries for sustainable economic and social growth. To that end, the Council operates several Research and Innovation Grant Schemes.

Under this Innovative Idea competition, the Consortium, under the Transformation of the Waste sector towards Energy Nexus in the Southwest Indian Ocean region

(TWEENex) project, invites eligible candidates to participate in this competition. The competition will run (in parallel) in the following countries:

- Comoros
- Madagascar
- Mauritius
- Seychelles

## 2. AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of this action is an inclusive R&I environment enabling the transformation towards a sustainable management of the waste value chain and production of energy from waste in the western Indian Ocean islands.

One of the main activities under the TWEENex is the strengthening of waste value chain actors in cross-sectoral collaboration.

The objectives are as follows:

- Employ a grassroots approach for innovation in waste-to-energy and waste management.
- Address any existing weaknesses in initiating, replicating, and scaling up projects due to lack of visibility and understanding.
- To bring project ideas to business fruition through facilitation and technical support.
- Enhanced collaboration between the public and private sector along the waste value chain.
- Research centres, universities, grass-roots organisations, and Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) developing and improving innovative technologies along the waste value chain.
- Uncovering innovative technologies along the waste value chain created by locals.

### 3. ELIGIBILITY

#### Who can apply?

Open to any individual (General Public), Small and Medium enterprises, association, research organisations, academia, private sector, group, or non-governmental organisations from:

- Comoros
- Madagascar
- Mauritius
- Seychelles

There is no restriction on age. Applications can be submitted individually or in groups.

The applicant must be a national and resident of one of the countries listed above.

Collaborative applications will be advantaged.

Application in Group: The group should consist of a maximum of 5 members, including a group leader.

There is no restriction on the number of applications that can be submitted under either category.

#### **How to participate?**

Participants are required to propose an innovative solution (Idea) pertaining to:

- Waste to Energy
- Circular Economy
- Waste Management
- Waste Value Chain Management

The proposed solution should be viable and address a specific issue related to the problem area.

Participants should also outline how they intend to further improve their idea or come up with a prototype within three (3) months during the Idea Acceleration phase.

Application forms should be filled online on the website [www.ioric.org](http://www.ioric.org)

#### **Video Applications**

Video applications of a maximum duration of five (5) minutes are also accepted provided they outline:

- The problem addressed
- The solution
- Its advantages and disadvantages
- The potential impact
- Further idea development

You may upload your video on YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and TikTok using the hashtags #TWENEX

Submission of video applications can be done on the online application form or by forwarding the video link to us by email on [ric@mric.mu](mailto:ric@mric.mu) and clearly indicating your contact details.

Video applications must be submitted before the deadline.

#### 1. EVALUATION

The ideas will be evaluated based on:

- Innovativeness
- Relevance
- Practicality/feasibility
- Scalability
- Potential impact (social, economic, environmental)
- Commercial potential

#### 2. PROCESS

##### Stage 1 – Application

Competition will be launched simultaneously in all 4 countries on the 12 December 2024 through a custom online platform. The Challenge will be open until **Friday, 14 February 2025 before 23:59 hours (GMT+4)**. No application will be accepted beyond the deadline.

##### Stage 2 – Administrative Screening

Administrative screening will be conducted to assess the completeness of applications. Candidates whose ideas satisfy the specified criteria will proceed to the pre-selection stage.

##### Stage 3 – Pre-selection

In this stage, shortlisted applications will be screened for the innovative merit of their applications. The pre-selected candidates would

then proceed to the selection/audition phase. Pre-selection will be country specific.

#### Stage 4 – Selection/Audition Phase

Pre-selected applicants will be given the opportunity to present their ideas to the jury. It is free to the participants to choose their preferred mode for presenting their ideas (this can be in the form of a PowerPoint presentation, oral presentation, demonstration, etc.).

The auditions will be conducted in person in each country. The onus will be on the participant to be present for each audition.

Out of this process, the best ideas will be selected for the Idea Acceleration phase.

The audition phase is video recorded and may be broadcasted on television or MRIC online platforms.

#### Stage 5 – Ideas Acceleration

The finalists will be provided with a seed funding of up to **Euro 400** (as required per their budget estimates) along with a Mentor to further consolidate their ideas and come up with a realizable plan/prototype or concept with a given time scale of **3 months**.

Participants will have to commit in coming up with a refined plan/prototype/concept in these three months. Regular monitoring will be conducted.

#### Stage 6 – Country Final

After the idea acceleration phase, the finalists will have to present their final concept/prototype/plan or minimum viable product to the jury in their respective country. The jury will then proceed to selecting the winners.

#### Stage 7- Regional Final

Winners from each country will have the opportunity to pitch their project to a regional jury.

### 6. SEED FUNDING AND DURATION

The Consortium will provide a seed funding of a maximum of **Euro 400 (four hundred euros)** per selected idea.

A maximum of 5 ideas will be selected per Country.

The maximum duration for funding of the project is **three (3) months** following the date of signature of contract.

The expected outcome is an innovative prototype which has significant potential to solve the stated problems.

#### Important Note:

- Applicants must be prepared and committed to leading their idea into the idea acceleration phase.
- The various phases of this competition will be video recorded and may be televised or broadcasted on online platforms.

### 7. ALLOWABLE AND NON-ALLOWABLE EXPENSES FOR SEED MONEY

#### Allowable Expenses

- Associated costs such as investment in new technologies, systems and software.
- Aspects of experimental research and development to create new applications or prototypes.
- Duly justified consultancy fees.
- Publications and books.

#### Non-allowable Expenses

- Paying off debts.
- Covering of operational expenses.
- Organisation of conferences, workshops or seminars.
- Academic studies for self-qualification.

### 8. DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS

Funding will be disbursed upfront to the selected applicant. The payment will be released upon signing of the contractual agreements by all parties concerned to enable the grantee to initiate the project.

The selected applicants will have to submit a short report on a milestone basis, together with a statement of accounts and invoices, showing how the funds have been utilised.

No awards will be made to applicants who are already recipient of full project funding from other agencies for the same or any similar project.

**8.1 Budget Reallocation**

Any redefinition and reallocation in the agreed tasks and associated budget described in the Task Scheduling and Budget Chart can only be carried out in consultation with the consortium which, if satisfied, will authorise the necessary amendments.

**3. PRIZE**

The best ideas will receive prize in the following structure for implementation of project:

**Country Winner**

A cash prize of Euro 1,000, a Trophy and recognition certificate(s).

**Grand Winner**

A cash prize of Euro 2,000, a Trophy and recognition certificate(s).

**All participants will be awarded certificates.**

**9. DISCLAIMER**

- The Consortium reserves the right to seek further information and/or clarifications from the proposer(s) of an idea before reaching a final decision.
- The Consortium will support all meritorious projects to the extent of resources available. However, it is under no obligation to fund any idea or any number of specific ideas on a given topic.
- The Consortium will inform all proposers of the outcome of their ideas. A decision will normally be made within one month of the date limit for submission of ideas. However, there may be cases where, because of the complexity of an idea, more time may be required for processing of the idea.

**10. DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION**

This Innovative Idea competition is open until **Friday, 14 February 2025 before 23:59 hours (GMT+4)**. All applications will be treated on merit.

**11. CONTACT US**

For more information, please contact us:

**Mauritius Research and Innovation Council  
Level 6, Ebene Heights,  
34 Cybercity, Ebene, 72201  
Mauritius**


**Tel: (230) 465 1235**

**Fax: (230) 465 1239**

**E-mail: [ric@mric.mu](mailto:ric@mric.mu)**

**Website: <http://www.mric.mu/> [www.ioric.org](http://www.ioric.org)**

**The Consortium reserves the right to revise and amend  
the terms and conditions laid down  
in this solicitation as and whenever necessary.**

An aerial photograph of a city at night, showing a grid of streets and illuminated buildings. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent teal color. The text is centered at the bottom of the page.

**Mauritius Research and Innovation Council**  
Level 6, Ebène Heights,  
34 Cybercity,  
Ebène

Email: [ric@mric.mu](mailto:ric@mric.mu)

Website: <http://www.mric.mu>