



primary

ANNEX 3 Hand out Summary

Open Call for Financial Support to Third parties as a mechanism to test, promote, validate, replicate PRIMARY business model blueprints and develop new value chains



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1. The PRIMARY project

PRIMARY (**New business for farmers and cooperatives in rural areas by local upcycling solutions using underutilized agricultural feedstocks**) is a Horizon Europe Innovation Action (IA) funded by the European Union (Project number: 101180167). The project supports the development, validation, and transfer of bioeconomy solutions that enable the sustainable use of underutilised agricultural residues in rural European regions.

The project focuses on feedstock streams that are widely available but often insufficiently valorised, namely grass, greenhouse residues, cotton by-products, and olive tree prunings. While these resources hold significant potential for producing food and feed ingredients, bio-based materials, bio-energy and bio-fuels, as well as soil-related products, their uptake remains constrained by limited local processing capacity and by the need to further adapt existing technical solutions to specific agricultural feedstocks and demonstrate their feasibility under real rural conditions, together with local actors and value chains.

PRIMARY addresses these challenges by developing and testing value-chain approaches that combine feedstock mobilisation, innovative processing technologies, and viable business model structures. The project works with six (6) main process solutions, including:

- (a) Grass biorefinery for fractionation of grass into protein- and fibre-rich streams for food, feed, and material applications;
- (b) Submerged fermentation of agricultural feedstocks to produce protein-rich food and feed ingredients;
- (c) Solid-state fermentation of greenhouse by-products to produce protein-rich feed ingredients;
- (d) Fibre-forming technologies for production of packaging and construction materials;
- (e) Pelletizing cotton and olive tree residues into biofuels for energy production;
- (f) Pyrolysis/gasification of cotton and olive tree originating residues into biochar.

These processes are developed with a strong emphasis on adaptability and transferability to different regional and operational settings.

An important output of PRIMARY is the development of four (4) preliminary business model blueprints, each associated with one of the targeted feedstock streams. These blueprints provide structured guidance on possible value-chain configurations, roles of actors, governance and cooperation models, indicative cost and revenue structure, operational requirements, and key environmental and social considerations. They are intended as reference frameworks rather than fixed solutions and require validation, adaptation, and refinement through practical implementation.

To support this validation process and extend the project's impact beyond the consortium regions, PRIMARY implements an Open Call providing Financial Support to Third Parties. Through the Open Call, selected consortia of local stakeholders, such as primary producers, SMEs, cooperatives, technology providers, and public or research organisations, will test and adapt PRIMARY processes and business model blueprints in new European regions. The Open Call projects are expected to generate practical evidence on technical feasibility, economic viability, and replicability under real-world conditions.

The insights, data, and lessons generated through the Open Call activities will feed back into the refinement of the PRIMARY business model blueprints and process concepts, contributing to the development of transferable knowledge, best practices, and guidance that can support wider deployment of sustainable bioeconomy solutions across Europe.

2. PRIMARY Open Call

The main objective of the PRIMARY Open Call (OC) is to validate the replicability and promote the adaptation of PRIMARY solutions in Europe.

The Open Call invites proposals from **consortia of local and regional actors, including technical partners and public (e.g., public body, university) or private organisations (e.g., primary producers, cooperatives, start-ups, SMEs, NGOs)**, that are active in the sustainable valorisation of agricultural residues. Selected consortia will receive funding to pilot, adapt, and validate processing solutions and business model blueprints within the PRIMARY framework, focusing on underutilised feedstocks and innovative bioeconomy processes. The supported projects are expected to demonstrate technical feasibility, economic viability, and replicability of integrated value-chain solutions under real rural conditions, contributing to the wider deployment of PRIMARY solutions across Europe.

Sub-projects must contribute to the following Objectives:

- **Objective 1:** Validate, adapt, and further improve the four (4) PRIMARY business model blueprints for the feedstock streams of grass, greenhouse residues, cotton by-products, and olive tree prunings. **Each proposal must address at least one (≥1) feedstock**, which may be selected from the PRIMARY feedstock streams or from similar agricultural residues, provided that their characteristics, availability, and valorisation pathways are comparable to the PRIMARY feedstocks and align with the project's objectives on sustainable biomass utilisation. Applicants are expected to structure their business model by specifically addressing the building blocks included in the *PRIMARY Open Call Business Model Template* (Annex 4: Open Call Applicants' Guide). The template, based on a circular business model canvas approach, supports Applicants in describing, testing, and refining their proposed value chain, covering the full scope from feedstock sourcing to market uptake. It further guides Applicants in addressing all key elements in a consistent manner and in validating them through practical implementation in the proposed regional context, thereby generating practical evidence on economic viability, operational feasibility, and value-chain governance arrangements.
- **Objective 2:** Demonstrate the replicability and scalability of PRIMARY processes and technologies by enabling third-party consortia to **pilot and adapt at least one (≥1) of the six (6) PRIMARY processing concepts**, namely biorefinery process, submerged fermentation, solid-state fermentation, fibre-forming technology, pelletizing or pyrolysis/gasification of agricultural residues, in European regions where similar pilot or demonstration infrastructure is limited or absent. Indicative examples included in the *PRIMARY Open Call Business Model Template* (Annex 4: Open Call Applicants' Guide), such as the Cotton Residues Use Case from Karditsa, Greece, illustrate how these processes can be implemented and adapted in practice. The selected sub-

projects will generate practical evidence on technical performance, operational feasibility, and adaptability to local conditions, supporting wider replication across rural European regions.

- **Objective 3:** Enhance stakeholders’ opportunities for knowledge transfer on bioeconomy-oriented production by actively engaging local and regional actors in pilot implementation and validation activities. Through this engagement, the Open Call will support mutual learning, capacity building, and the exchange of practical experience across regions, thereby extending the impact of PRIMARY solutions beyond the consortium countries.

PRIMARY will launch one (1) single Open Call providing Financial Support to Third Parties (FSTP) as a mechanism towards the validation of the four (4) PRIMARY business model blueprints on feedstock-specific value chains, as well as to promote and test the processes and technologies replicability and scalability potential to other regions beyond the ones participating to the project (Finland: Ostrobothnia, Häme, Savo; Greece: Karditsa, Heraklion, Lykovrysi/Regional Unit of North Athens). To this end, it will fund 6-9 sub-projects (consortia of 2-3 parties) with the maximum grant budget to be €150,000 per sub-project for consortia of three (3) parties and €100,000 per sub-project for consortia of two (2) parties. The total amount of the Open Call will reach at maximum €900,000.00.

Total amount	No. of projects	Partners per sub-project	Maximum budget per sub-project
€900,000	6-9	2	€100,000
		3	€150,000

Important notice:

The submission timeline of the Open Call for the proposals is from the 9th of March 2026 to the 8th of June 2026.

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Grant agreement ID: 101180167



**Funded by
the European Union**

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